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THE WORKS

OF

JAMES BEATTIE, LL. D.

VOLUME X.

THE

MINSTREL:

IN TWO BOOKS.

WITH SOME OTHER POEMS.

BY JAMES BEATTIE, LL. D.

TO WHICH ARE NOW ADDED,

MISCELLANIES.

BY JAMES HAY BEATTIE, A. M.

WITH

AN ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE AND CHARACTER.

PHILADELPHIA:

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THE

MINSTREL:

OR,

THE PROGRESS OF GENIUS.

WITH

SOME OTHER POEMS.

BY JAMES BEATTIE, LL. D.

TO

MRS. MONTAGU,

THESE

LITTLE POEMS,

NOW REVISED AND CORRECTED,

FOR THE LAST TIME,

ARE,

WITH EVERY SENTIMENT OF ESTEEM AND

GRATITUDE,

MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

ADVERTISEMENT.

January 1777.

HAVING lately seen in print some poems ascribed to me, which I never wrote, and some of my own inaccurately copied, I thought it would not be improper to publish, in this little volume, all the verses of which I am willing to be considered as the author. Many others I did indeed write in the early part of my life; but they were in general so incorrect, that I would not rescue them from oblivion, even if a wish could do it.

Some of the few now offered to the publick would perhaps have been suppressed, if in making this collection I had implicitly followed my own judgment.

But in so small a matter who would refuse to submit his opinion to that of a friend?

It is of no consequence to the reader to know the date of any of these little poems. But some private reasons determine the Author to add, that most of them were written many years ago, and that the greater part of the MINSTREL, which is his latest attempt in this way, was composed in the year one thousand seven hundred and sixty eight.

PREFACE

TO

THE MINSTREL.

THE design was, to trace the progress of a poetical genius, born in a rude age, from the first dawning of fancy and reason, till that period at which he may be supposed capable of appearing in the world as a MINSTREL, that is, as an itinerant Poet and Musician; a character which, according to the notions of our forefathers, was not only respectable, but sacred.

I have endeavoured to imitate SPENSER in the measure of his verse, and in the harmony, simplicity, and variety of his composition. Antique expressions I have avoided; admitting, however, some old words, where they seemed to suit the subject: but I hope none will be found that are now obsolete, or in any degree not intelligible to a reader of English poetry.

To those, who may be disposed to ask, what could induce me to write in so difficult a measure, I can only answer, that it pleases my ear,

nd seems, from its Gothick structure and ori-
nal, to bear some relation to the subject and
pirit of the Poem. It admits both simplicity and
nagnificence of sound and of language, beyond
any other stanza that I am acquainted with. It
allows the sententiousness of the couplet, as well
as the more complex modulation of blank verse.
What some criticks have remarked, of its uni-
formity growing at last tiresome to the ear, will
be found to hold true, only when the poetry is
faulty in other respects.

THE

MINSTREL:

OR,

THE PROGRESS OF GENIUS.

BOOK I.

XX.

" Along yon glittering sky what glory streams!
" What majesty attends Night's lovely queen!
" Fair laugh our valleys in the vernal beams;
" And mountains rise, and oceans roll between,
" And all conspire to beautify the scene.
" But, in the mental world, what chaos drear!
" What forms of mournful, loathsome, furious mien!
" O when shall that Eternal Morn appear,
" These dreadful forms to chase, this chaos dark to clear!

XXI.

" O Thou, at whose creative smile, yon heaven,
" In all the pomp of beauty, life, and light,
" Rose from th' abyss; when dark Confusion, driven
" Down down the bottomless profound of night,
" Fled, where he ever flies thy piercing sight!
" O glance on these sad shades one pitying ray,
" To blast the fury of oppressive might,
" Melt the hard heart to love and mercy's sway,
" And cheer the wandering soul, and light him on the
" way."

XXII.

Silence ensued: and Edwin raised his eyes
In tears, for grief lay heavy at his heart.
" And is it thus in courtly life (he cries)
" That man to man acts a betrayer's part?

" And dares he thus the gifts of heaven pervert,
" Each social instinct, and sublime desire?
" Hail poverty! if honour, wealth, and art,
" If what the great pursue, and learn'd admire,
" Thus dissipate and quench the soul's ethereal fire!"

XXIII.

He said, and turn'd away; nor did the Sage
O'erhear, in silent orisons employ'd.
The Youth, his rising sorrow to assuage,
Home as he hied, the evening scene enjoy'd:
For now no cloud obscures the starry void;
The yellow moonlight sleeps on all the hills;*
Nor is the mind with startling sounds annoy'd;
A soothing murmur the lone region fills,
Of groves, and dying gales, and melancholy rills.

XXIV.

But he from day to day more anxious grew.
The voice still seem'd to vibrate on his ear.
Nor durst he hope the Hermit's tale untrue;
For man he seem'd to love, and heaven to fear;
And none speaks false, where there is none to hear.
" Yet, can man's gentle heart become so fell!
" No more in vain conjecture let me wear
" My hours away, but seek the Hermit's cell;
" 'Tis he my doubt can clear, perhaps my care dispel."

*How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank. *Shakspeare*.

XXV.

At early dawn the Youth his journey took,
And many a mountain pass'd, and valley wide,
Then reach'd the wild; where, in a flowery nook,
And seated on a mossy stone, he spied
An ancient man: his harp lay him beside.
A stag sprang from the pasture at his call,
And, kneeling, lick'd the wither'd hand that tied
A wreath of woodbine round his antlers tall,
And hung his lofty neck with many a floweret small.

XXVI.

And now the hoary Sage arose, and saw
The wanderer approaching: innocence
Smiled on his glowing cheek, but modest awe
Depress'd his eye, that fear'd to give offence.
" Who art thou, courteous stranger? and from whence?
" Why roam thy steps to this sequester'd dale?"
" A shepherd-boy (the Youth replied) far hence
" My habitation; hear my artless tale;
" Nor levity nor falsehood shall thine ear assail.

XXVII.

" Late as I roam'd, intent on Nature's charms,
" I reach'd at eve this wilderness profound;
" And, leaning where yon oak expands her arms,
" Heard these rude cliffs thine awful voice rebound;

"(For in thy speech I recognise the sound.)
" You mourn'd for ruin'd man, and virtue lost,
" And seem'd to feel of keen remorse the wound,
" Pondering on former days by guilt engross'd,
" Or in the giddy storm of dissipation toss'd.

XXVIII.

" But say, in courtly life can craft be learn'd,
" Where knowledge opens, and exalts the soul?
" Where Fortune lavishes her gifts unearn'd,
" Can selfishness the liberal heart control?
" Is glory there achiev'd by arts as foul
" As those that felons, fiends, and furies plan?
" Spiders ensnare, snakes poison, tigers prowl;
" Love is the godlike attribute of man.
" O teach a simple youth this mystery to scan.

XXIX.

" Or else the lamentable strain disclaim,
" And give me back the calm, contented mind;
" Which, late, exulting, view'd in Nature's frame,
" Goodness untainted, wisdom unconfined,
" Grace, grandeur, and utility combined.
" Restore those tranquil days, that saw me still
" Well pleased with all, but most with humankind:
" When Fancy roam'd through Nature's works at will,
" Uncheck'd by cold distrust, and uninform'd of ill."

XXX.

" Wouldst thou (the Sage replied) in peace return
" To the gay dreams of fond romantick youth,
" Leave me to hide, in this remote sojourn,
" From every gentle ear the dreadful truth:
" For if my desultory strain with ruth
" And indignation make thine eyes o'erflow,
" Alas! what comfort could thy anguish sooth,
" Shouldst thou th' extent of human folly know.
" Be ignorance thy choice, where knowledge leads to wo.

XXXI.

" But let untender thoughts afar be driven;
" Nor venture to arraign the dread decree.
" For know, to man, as candidate for heaven,
" The voice of The Eternal said, Be free:
" And this divine prerogative to thee
" Does virtue, happiness, and heaven convey;
" For virtue is the child of liberty,
" And happiness of virtue; nor can they
" Be free to keep the path, who are not free to stray.

XXXII.

" Yet leave me not. I would allay that grief,
" Which else might thy young virtue overpower,
" And in thy converse I shall find relief,
" When the dark shades of melancholy lower;

" For solitude has many a dreary hour,
" Even when exempt from grief, remorse, and pain:
" Come often then; for, haply, in my bower,
" Amusement, knowledge, wisdom thou may'st gain:
" If I one soul improve, I have not lived in vain."

XXXIII.

And now, at length, to Edwin's ardent gaze
The Muse of history unrols her page.
But few, alas! the scenes her art displays,
To charm his fancy, or his heart engage.
Here Chiefs their thirst of power in blood assuage,
And straight their flames with tenfold fierceness burn:
Here smiling Virtue prompts the patriot's rage,
But lo, erelong, is left alone to mourn,
And languish in the dust, and clasp th' abandon'd urn.

XXXIV.

" Ambition's slippery verge shall mortals tread,
" Where ruin's gulf unfathom'd yawns beneath!
" Shall life, shall liberty be lost, (he said)
" For the vain toys that Pomp and Power bequeath!
" The car of victory, the plume, the wreath,
" Defend not from the bolt of fate the brave;
" No note the clarion of Renown can breathe,
" T' alarm the long night of the lonely grave,
" Or check the headlong haste of Time's o'erwhelming
" wave.

XXXV.

" Ah, what avails it to have traced the springs,
" That whirl of empire the stupendous wheel!
" Ah, what have I to do with conquering kings,
" Hands drench'd in blood, and breasts begirt with
" steel!
" To those, whom Nature taught to think and feel,
" Heroes, alas! are things of small concern;
" Could History man's secret heart reveal,
" And what imports a heaven-born mind to learn,
" Her transcripts to explore what bosom would not
" yearn!

XXXVI.

" This praise, O Cheronean Sage,* is thine.
" (Why should this praise to thee alone belong!)
" All else from Nature's moral path decline,
" Lured by the toys that captivate the throng;
" To herd in cabinets and camps, among
" Spoil, carnage, and the cruel pomp of pride;
" Or chant of heraldry the drowsy song,
" How tyrant blood, o'er many a region wide,
" Rolls to a thousand thrones its execrable tide.

* Plutarch.

XXXVII.

" O who of man the story will unfold,
" Ere victory and empire wrought annoy,
" In that elysian age (misnamed of gold)
" The age of love, and innocence and joy,
" When all were great and free! man's sole employ
" To deck the bosom of his parent earth;
" Or toward his bower the murmuring stream decoy,
" To aid the floweret's long-expected birth,
" And lull the bed of peace, and crown the board of mirth.

XXXVIII.

" Sweet were your shades, O ye primeval groves,
" Whose boughs to man his food and shelter lent,
" Pure in his pleasures, happy in his loves,
" His eye still smiling, and his heart content.
" Then, hand in hand, health, sport, and labour went.
" Nature supply'd the wish she taught to crave.
" None prowl'd for prey, none watch'd to circumvent,
" To all an equal lot Heaven's bounty gave:
" No vassal fear'd his lord, no tyrant fear'd his slave.

XXXIX.

" But ah! th' Historick Muse has never dared
" To pierce those hallow'd bowers: 'tis Fancy's beam
" Pour'd on the vision of th' enraptured Bard,
" That paints the charms of that delicious theme.

" Then hail sweet Fancy's ray! and hail the dream
" That weans the weary soul from guilt and wo!
" Careless what others of my choice may deem,
" I long where Love and Fancy lead to go,
" And meditate on heaven; enough of earth I know."

XL.

" I cannot blame thy choice (the Sage replied
" For soft and smooth are Fancy's flowery ways.
" And yet, even there, if left without a guide,
" The young adventurer unsafely plays.
" Eyes dazzled long by Fiction's gaudy rays
" In modest Truth no light nor beauty find.
" And who, my child, would trust the meteor-blaze,
" That soon must fail, and leave the wanderer blind,
" More dark and helpless far, than if it ne'er had shined?

XLI.

" Fancy enervates, while it sooths, the heart,
" And, while it dazzles, wounds the mental sight:
" To joy each heightening charm it can impart,
" But wraps the hour of wo in tenfold night.
" And often, where no real ills affright,
" Its visionary fiends, an endless train,
" Assail with equal or superiour might,
" And through the throbbing heart, and dizzy brain,
" And shivering nerves, shoot stings of more than mor-
" tal pain.

XLII.

" And yet, alas! the real ills of life
" Claim the full vigour of a mind prepared,
" Prepared for patient, long, laborious strife,
" Its guide Experience, and Truth its guard
" We fare on earth as other men have fared
" Were they successful? Let not us despair
" Was disappointment oft their sole reward?
" Yet shall their tale instruct, if it declare,
" How they have borne the load ourselves are doom'd
" to bear.

XLIII.

" What charms th' Historick Muse adorn, from spoils,
" And blood, and tyrants, when she wings her flight,
" To hail the patriot Prince, whose pious toils
" Saved to science, liberty, and right,
" And peace, through every age divinely bright
" Shall shine the boast and wonder of mankind!
" Sees yonder sun, from his meridian height,
" A lovelier scene, than Virtue thus enshrined
" In power, and man with man for mutual aid combined

XLIV.

" Hail sacred Polity, by Freedom rear'd!
" Hail sacred Freedom, when by Law restrain'd!
" Without you what were man? A groveling herd
" In darkness, wretchedness, and want enchain'd

" Sublimed by you, the Greek and Roman reign'd
" In arts unrivall'd: O, to latest days,
" In Albion may your influence unprofaned
" To godlike worth the generous bosom raise,
" And prompt the Sage's lore, and fire the Poet's lays!

XLV.

" But now let other themes our care engage.
" For lo, with modest yet majestick grace,
" To curb Imagination's lawless rage,
" And from within the cherish'd heart to brace,
" Philosophy appears. The gloomy race
" By Indolence and moping Fancy bred,
" Fear, Discontent, Solicitude give place,
" And Hope and Courage brighten in their stead,
" While on the kindling soul her vital beams are shed.

XLVI.

" Then waken from long lethargy to life*
" The seeds of happiness, and powers of thought;
" Then jarring appetites forego their strife,
" A strife by ignorance to madness wrought.

* The influence of the Philosophick Spirit, in humanizing the mind, and preparing it for intellectual exertion and delicate pleasure;—in exploring, by the help of geometry, the system of the universe;—in banishing superstition;—in promoting navigation, agriculture, medicine, and moral and political science:—from Stanza XLVI. to Stanza LVI.

" Pleasure by savage man is dearly bought
" With fell revenge, lust that defies control,
" With gluttony and death. The mind untaught
" Is a dark waste, where fiends and tempests howl;
" As Phœbus to the world, is Science to the soul.

XLVII.

"And Reason now through Number, Time, and Space,
" Darts the keen lustre of her serious eye,
" And learns, from facts compared, the laws to trace,
" Whose long progression leads to Deity.
" Can mortal strength presume to soar so high!
" Can mortal sight, so oft bedimm'd with tears,
" Such glory bear!—for lo, the shadows fly
" From Nature's face; Confusion disappears,
" And Order charms the eye, and Harmony the ears.

XLVIII.

" In the deep windings of the grove, no more
" The hag obscene, and griesly phantom dwell;
" Nor in the fall of mountain-stream, or roar
" Of winds, is heard the angry spirit's yell;
" No wizard mutters the tremendous spell,
" Nor sinks convulsive in prophetick swoon;
" Nor bids the noise of drums and trumpets swell,
" To ease of fancied pangs the labouring moon,
" Or chase the shade that blots the blazing orb of noon.

XLIX.

" Many a long-lingering year, in lonely isle,
" Stunn'd with th' eternal turbulence of waves,
" Lo, with dim eyes, that never learn'd to smile,
" And trembling hands, the famish'd native craves
" Of Heaven his wretched fare: shivering in caves,
" Or scorch'd on rocks, he pines from day to day;
" But Science gives the word; and lo, he braves
" The surge and tempest, lighted by her ray,
" And to a happier land wafts merrily away.

L.

" And even where Nature loads the teeming plain
" With the full pomp of vegetable store,
" Her bounty, unimproved, is deadly bane:
" Dark woods and rankling wilds, from shore to shore,
" Stretch their enormous gloom; which to explore
" Even fancy trembles, in her sprightliest mood;
" For there, each eyeball gleams with lust of gore,
" Nestles each murderous and each monstrous brood,
" Plague lurks in every shade, and steams from every
" flood.

LI.

" 'Twas from Philosophy man learn'd to tame
" The soil by plenty to intemperance fed.
" Lo, from the echoing ax, and thundering flame,
" Poison and plague and yelling rage are fled.

" The waters, bursting from their slimy bed,
" Bring health and melody to every vale:
" And, from the breezy main, and mountain's head,
" Ceres and Flora, to the sunny dale,
" To fan their glowing charms, invite the fluttering gale

LII.

" What dire necessities on every hand
" Our art, our strength, our fortitude require!
" Of foes intestine what a numerous band
" Against this little throb of life conspire!
" Yet Science can elude their fatal ire
" Awhile, and turn aside Death's level'd dart,
" Sooth the sharp pang, allay the fever's fire,
" And brace the nerves once more, and cheer the heart
" And yet a few soft nights and balmy days impart.

LIII.

" Nor less to regulate man's moral frame
" Science exerts her all-composing sway.
" Flutters thy breast with fear, or pants for fame,
" Or pines to Indolence and Spleen a prey,
" Or Avarice, a fiend more fierce than they?
" Flee to the shade of Academus' grove;
" Where cares molest not, discord melts away
" In harmony, and the pure passions prove
" How sweet the words of truth breathed from the lip
" of Love.

LIV.

" What cannot Art and Industry perform,
" When Science plans the progress of their toil!
" They smile at penury, disease, and storm;
" And oceans from their mighty mounds recoil.
" When tyrants scourge, or demagogues embroil
" A land, or when the rabble's headlong rage
" Order transforms to anarchy and spoil,
" Deep-versed in man the philosophick Sage
" Prepares with lenient hand their frensy to assuage.

LV.

" 'Tis he alone, whose comprehensive mind,
" From situation, temper, soil and clime
" Explored, a nation's various powers can bind
" And various orders, in one form sublime
" Of policy, that, midst the wrecks of time,
" Secure shall lift its head on high, nor fear
" Th' assault of foreign or domestick crime,
" While publick faith, and publick love sincere,
" And Industry and Law maintain their sway severe."

LVI.

Enraptured by the Hermit's strain, the Youth
Proceeds the path of Science to explore.
And now, expanding to the beams of Truth,
New energies, and charms unknown before,

His mind discloses: Fancy now no more
Wantons on fickle pinion through the skies;
But, fix'd in aim, and conscious of her power,
Aloft from cause to cause exults to rise,
Creation's blended stores arranging as she flies.

LVII.

Nor love of novelty alone inspires,
Their laws and nice dependencies to scan;
For, mindful of the aids that life requires,
And of the services man owes to man,
He meditates new arts on Nature's plan;
The cold desponding breast of Sloth to warm,
The flame of Industry and Genius fan,
And Emulation's noble rage alarm,
And the long hours of Toil and Solitude to charm.

LVIII.

But She, who set on fire his infant heart,
And all his dreams, and all his wanderings shared
And bless'd, the Muse, and her celestial art,
Still claim th' Enthusiast's fond and first regard.
From Nature's beauties variously compared
And variously combined, he learns to frame
Those forms of bright perfection,* which the Bard,
While boundless hopes and boundless views inflame,
Enamour'd consecrates to never-dying fame.

* General ideas of excellence, the immediate archetypes

LIX.

Of late, with cumbersome, though pompous show,
Edwin would oft his flowery rhyme deface,
Through ardour to adorn; but Nature now
To his experienced eye a modest grace
Presents, where Ornament the second place
Holds, to intrinsick worth and just design
Subservient still. Simplicity apace
Tempers his rage: he owns her charm divine,
And clears th' ambiguous phrase, and lops th' unwieldy line.

LX.

Fain would I sing (much yet unsung remains)
What sweet delirium o'er his bosom stole,
When the great Shepherd of the Mantuan plains*
His deep majestic melody 'gan roll:
Fain would I sing what transports storm'd his soul,
How the red current throbb'd his veins along,
When, like Pelides, bold beyond control,
Without art graceful, without effort strong,
Homer rais'd high to heaven the loud, th' impetuous song.

of sublime imitation, both in painting and in poetry. *See Aristotle's Poeticks, and the Discourses of Sir Joshua Reynolds.*

* Virgil.

LXI.

And how his lyre, though rude her first essays,
Now skill'd to sooth, to triumph, to complain,
Warbling at will through each harmonious maze,
Was taught to modulate the artful strain,
I fain would sing:—but ah! I strive in vain.
Sighs from a breaking heart my voice confound,
With trembling step, to join yon weeping train,
I haste, where gleams funereal glare around,
And, mix'd with shrieks of wo, the knells of death resound.

LXII.

Adieu, ye lays, that Fancy's flowers adorn,
The soft amusement of the vacant mind!
He sleeps in dust, and all the Muses mourn,
He, whom each virtue fired, each grace refined,
Friend, teacher, pattern, darling of mankind!*
He sleeps in dust. Ah, how shall I pursue
My theme! To heart-consuming grief resign'd
Here on his recent grave I fix my view,
And pour my bitter tears. Ye flowery lays, adieu!

* This excellent person died suddenly on the 10th of February, 1773. The conclusion of the poem was written a few days after.

LXIII.

Art thou, my GREGORY, for ever fled!
And am I left to unavailing wo!
When fortune's storms assail this weary head,
Where cares long since have shed untimely snow,
Ah, now for comfort whither shall I go!
No more thy soothing voice my anguish cheers:
Thy placid eyes with smiles no longer glow,
My hopes to cherish, and allay my fears.
'Tis meet that I should mourn: flow forth afresh my tears.

POEMS

ON

SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

POEMS

ON

SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

RETIREMENT.

1758.

WHEN in the crimson cloud of Even,
The lingering light decays,
And Hesper on the front of heaven
His glittering gem displays;
Deep in the silent vale, unseen,
Beside a lulling stream,
A pensive Youth, of placid mien,
Indulged this tender theme.

Ye cliffs, in hoary grandeur piled
High o'er the glimmering dale;
Ye woods along whose windings wild
Murmurs the solemn gale;

Where Melancholy strays forlorn,
And Wo retires to weep,
What time the wan moon's yellow horn,
Gleams on the western deep:

To you, ye wastes, whose artless charms
Ne'er drew Ambition's eye,
Scaped a tumultuous world's alarms,
To your retreats I fly.
Deep in your most sequester'd bower
Let me at last recline,
Where Solitude, mild, modest Power,
Leans on her ivy'd shrine.

How shall I woo thee, matchless Fair!
Thy heavenly smile how win!
Thy smile that smooths the brow of Care,
And stills the storm within.
O wilt thou to thy favourite grove
Thine ardent votary bring,
And bless his hours, and bid them move
Serene, on silent wing!

Oft let remembrance sooth his mind
With dreams of former days,
When in the lap of Peace reclined
He framed his infant lays;

When Fancy roved at large, nor Care
Nor cold Distrust alarm'd,
Nor Envy with malignant glare
His simple youth had harm'd.

'Twas then, O Solitude, to thee
His early vows were paid,
From heart sincere, and warm, and free,
Devoted to the shade.
Ah why did Fate his steps decoy
In stormy paths to roam,
Remote from all congenial joy!—
O take the Wanderer home.

Thy shades, thy silence now be mine,
Thy charms my only theme;
My haunt the hollow cliff, whose pine
Waves o'er the gloomy stream.
Whence the scared owl on pinions gray
Breaks from the rustling boughs,
And down the lone vale sails away
To more profound repose.

O, while to thee the woodland pours
Its wildly warbling song,
And balmy from the bank of flowers
The zephyr breathes along;

Let no rude sound invade from far,
No vagrant foot be nigh,
No ray from Grandeur's gilded car,
Flash on the startled eye.

But if some pilgrim through the glade
Thy hallow'd bowers explore,
O guard from harm his hoary head,
And listen to his lore;
For he of joys divine shall tell,
That wean from earthly wo,
And triumph o'er the mighty spell
That chains this heart below.

For me, no more the path invites
Ambition loves to tread;
No more I climb those toilsome heights
By guileful Hope misled;
Leaps my fond fluttering heart no more
To Mirth's enlivening strain;
For present pleasure soon is o'er,
And all the past is vain.

ELEGY.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1758.

STILL shall unthinking man substantial deem
The forms that fleet through life's deceitful dream?
Till at some stroke of Fate the vision flies,
And sad realities in prospect rise;
And, from elysian slumbers rudely torn,
The startled soul awakes, to think, and mourn.
O ye, whose hours in jocund train advance,
Whose spirits to the song of gladness dance,
Who flowery plains in endless pomp survey,
Glittering in beams of visionary day;
O, yet while Fate delays th' impending wo,
Be roused to thought, anticipate the blow;
Lest, like the lightning's glance, the sudden ill
Flash to confound, and penetrate to kill;
Lest, thus encompass'd with funereal gloom,
Like me, ye bend o'er some untimely tomb,
Pour your wild ravings in Night's frighted ear,
And half pronounce Heaven's sacred doom severe.
Wise, Beauteous, Good! O every grace combined,
That charms the eye, or captivates the mind!

Fresh, as the floweret opening on the morn,
Whose leaves bright drops of liquid pearl adorn!
Sweet, as the downy-pinion'd gale, that roves
To gather fragrance in Arabian groves!
Mild, as the melodies at close of day,
That heard remote along the vale decay!
Yet, why with these compared? What tints so fine,
What sweetness, mildness, can be match'd with thine?
Why roam abroad, since recollection true
Restores the lovely form to Fancy's view?
Still let me gaze, and every care beguile,
Gaze on that cheek, where all the graces smile;
That soul-expressing eye, benignly bright,
Where meekness beams ineffable delight;
That brow, where Wisdom sits enthroned serene,
Each feature forms, and dignifies the mien:
Still let me listen, while her words impart
The sweet effusions of the blameless heart,
'Tis all my soul, each tumult charm'd away,
Yields, gently led, to Virtue's easy sway.

By thee inspired, O Virtue, Age is young,
And musick warbles from the faltering tongue:
Thy ray creative cheers the clouded brow,
And decks the faded cheek with rosy glow,
Brightens the joyless aspect, and supplies
Pure heavenly lustre to the languid eyes:
But when youth's living bloom reflects thy beams,
Resistless on the view the glory streams,

Love, Wonder, Joy, alternately alarm,
And beauty dazzles with angelick charm.
Ah whither fled! ye dear illusions stay!
Lo, pale and silent lies the lovely clay.
How are the roses on that cheek decay'd,
Which late the purple light of youth display'd!
Health on her form each sprightly grace bestow'd;
With life and thought each speaking feature glow'd.
Fair was the blossom, soft the vernal sky;
Elate with hope we deem'd no tempest nigh;
When lo, a whirlwind's instantaneous gust
Left all its beauties withering in the dust.
Cold the soft hand, that sooth'd Wo's weary head!
And quench'd the eye, the pitying tear that shed!
And mute the voice, whose pleasing accents stole,
Infusing balm, into the rankled soul!
O Death, why arm with cruelty thy power,
And spare the idle weed, yet lop the flower!
Why fly thy shafts in lawless errour driven!
Is Virtue then no more the care of Heaven!
But peace, bold thought! be still, my bursting heart!
We, not ELIZA, felt the fatal dart.
Escaped the dungeon does the slave complain,
Nor bless the friendly hand that broke the chain?
Say, pines not Virtue for the lingering morn,
On this dark wild condemn'd to roam forlorn!
Where Reason's meteor-rays, with sickly glow,
O'er the dun gloom a dreadful glimmering throw;

Disclosing dubious to th' affrighted eye
O'erwhelming mountains tottering from on high,
Black billowy deeps in storm perpetual toss'd,
And weary ways in wildering labyrinths lost.
O happy stroke, that burst the bonds of clay,
Darts through the rending gloom the blaze of day,
And wings the soul with boundless flight to soar,
Where dangers threat, and fears alarm no more.
Transporting thought! here let me wipe away
The tear of grief and wake a bolder lay.
But ah! the swimming eye o'erflows anew;
Nor check the sacred drops to pity due;
Lo, where in speechless, hopeless anguish, bend
O'er her loved dust, the Parent, Brother, Friend!
How vain the hope of man! But cease thy strain,
Nor sorrow's dread solemnity profane;
Mix'd with yon drooping Mourners, on her bier
In silence shed the sympathetick tear.

ODE TO HOPE.

I. 1.

O THOU, who glad'st the pensive soul,
More than Aurora's smile the swain forlorn,
Left all night long to mourn
Where desolation frowns, and tempests howl;
And shrieks of wo, as intermits the storm,
Far o'er the monstrous wilderness resound,
And cross the gloom darts many a shapeless form,
And many a fire-eyed visage glares around.
O come, and be once more my guest.
Come, for thou oft thy suppliant's vow hast heard,
And oft with smiles indulgent cheer'd
And soothed him into rest.

I. 2.

Smit by thy rapture-beaming eye
Deep flashing through the midnight of their mind,
The sable bands combined,
Where Fear's black banner bloats the troubled sky,
Appall'd retire. Suspicion hides her head,
Nor dares th' obliquely gleaming eyeball raise;
Despair, with gorgon-figured veil o'erspread,
Speeds to dark Phlegethon's detested maze.

Lo, startled at the heavenly ray,
With speed unwonted Indolence upsprings,
And, heaving, lifts her leaden wings,
And sullen glides away:

I. 3.

Ten thousand forms, by pining Fancy view'd,
Dissolve.—Above the sparkling flood
When Phœbus rears his awful brow,
From lengthening lawn and valley low
The troops of fen-born mists retire.
Along the plain
The joyous swain
Eyes the gay villages again,
And gold-illuminated spire;
While on the billowy ether borne
Floats the loose lay's jovial measure;
And light along the fairy Pleasure,
Her green robes glittering to the morn,
Wantons on silken wing. And goblins all
To the damp dungeon shrink, or hoary hall,
Or westward, with impetuous flight,
Shoot to the desert realms of their congenial Night.

II. 1.

When first on Childhood's eager gaze
Life's varied landscape, stretch'd immense around,

Starts out of night profound,
Thy voice incites to tempt th' untrodden maze.
Fond he surveys thy mild maternal face,
His bashful eye still kindling as he views,
And, while thy lenient arm supports his pace,
With beating heart the upland path pursues:
The path that leads, where, hung sublime,
And seen afar, youth's gallant trophies, bright
In fancy's rainbow ray, invite
His wingy nerves to climb.

II. 2.

Pursue thy pleasurable way,
Safe in the guidance of thy heavenly guard,
While melting airs are heard,
And soft-eyed cherub forms around thee play:
Simplicity, in careless flowers array'd,
Prattling amusive in his accent meek;
And Modesty, half turning as afraid,
The smile just dimpling on his glowing cheek!
Content and Leisure, hand in hand
With Innocence and Peace, advance, and sing;
And Mirth, in many a mazy ring,
Frisks o'er the flowery land.

II. 3.

Frail man, how various is thy lot below!
To-day tho' gales propitious blow,

And Peace soft gliding down the sky
Lead Love along and Harmony,
To-morrow the gay scene deforms:
Then all around
The thunder's sound
Rolls rattling on through heaven's profound,
And down rush all the storms.
Ye days, that balmy influence shed,
When sweet Childhood, ever sprightly,
In paths of pleasure sported lightly,
Whither, ah whither are ye fled!
Ye cherub train, that brought him on his way,
O leave him not midst tumult and dismay;
For now youth's eminence he gains:
But what a weary length of lingering toil remains!

III. 1.

They shrink, they vanish into air.
Now Slander taints with pestilence the gale;
And mingling cries assail,
The wail of Wo, and groan of grim Despair.
Lo, wizard Envy from his serpent eye
Darts quick destruction in each baleful glance;
Pride smiling stern, and yellow Jealousy,
Frowning Disdain, and haggard Hate advance;
Behold, amidst the dire array,

Pale wither'd Care his giant-stature rears,
And lo, his iron hand prepares
To grasp its feeble prey.

III. 2.

Who now will guard bewilder'd youth
Safe from the fierce assault of hostile rage?
Such war can Virtue wage,
Virtue, that bears the sacred shield of Truth?
Alas! full oft on Guilt's victorious car,
The spoils of Virtue are in triumph borne;
While the fair captive, mark'd with many a scar,
In lone obscurity, oppress'd, forlorn,
Resigns to tears her angel form.
Ill-fated youth, then whither wilt thou fly?
No friend, no shelter now is nigh,
And onward rolls the storm.

III. 3.

But whence the sudden beam that shoots along?
Why shrink aghast the hostile throng?
Lo, from amidst Affliction's night,
Hope bursts all radiant on the sight:
Her words the troubled bosom sooth.
" Why thus dismay'd?
" Though foes invade,
" Hope ne'er is wanting to their aid,
" Who tread the path of truth.

" 'Tis I, who smooth the rugged way,
" I, who close the eyes of Sorrow,
" And with glad visions of to-morrow
" Repair the weary soul's decay.
" When Death's cold touch thrills to the freezing heart,
" Dreams of heaven's opening glories I impart,
" Till the freed spirit springs on high
" In rapture too severe for weak Mortality."

Now crowded in a grotto's gloom,
All hope extinct, they wait their doom.
Dire was the silence, till, at length,
Even from despair deriving strength,
With bloody eye, and furious look,
A daring youth arose, and spoke.
" O wretched race, the scorn of Fate,
" Whom ills of every sort await!
" O, cursed with keenest sense to feel
" The sharpest sting of every ill!
" Say ye, who, fraught with mighty scheme,
" Of liberty and vengeance dream,
" What now remains? To what recess
" Shall we our weary steps address,
" Since Fate is ever more pursuing
" All ways, and means to work our ruin?
" Are we alone, of all beneath,
" Condemn'd to misery worse than death!
" Must we, with fruitless labour, strive
" In misery worse than death to live!
" No. Be the smaller ill our choice:
" So dictates Nature's powerful voice.
" Death's pang will in a moment cease;
" And then, All hail, eternal peace!"
Thus while he spoke, his words impart
The dire resolve to every heart.
A distant lake in prospect lay,
That glittering in the solar ray,

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The dire resolve to every heart.
A distant lake in prospect lay,
That glittering in the solar ray,

Gleam'd through the dusky trees, and shot
A trembling light along the grot.
Thither with one consent they bend,
Their sorrows with their lives to end,
While each, in thought, already hears
The water hissing in his ears.

Fast by the margin of the lake,
Conceal'd within a thorny brake,
A Linnet sate, whose careless lay
Amused the solitary day.
Careless he sung, for on his breast
Sorrow no lasting trace impress'd;
When suddenly he heard a sound
Of swift feet traversing the ground.
Quick to the neighbouring tree he flies,
Thence trembling casts around his eyes;
No foe appear'd, his fears were vain;
Pleased he renews the sprightly strain.

The hares, whose noise had caused his fright,
Saw with surprise the linnet's flight.
Is there on earth a wretch, they said,
Whom our approach can strike with dread?
An instantaneous change of thought
To tumult every bosom wrought.
So fares the systembuilding sage,
Who plodding on from youth to age,
At last on some foundation-dream
Has rear'd aloft his goodly scheme,

And proved his predecessors fools,
And bound all Nature by his rules;
So fares he in that dreadful hour,
When injured Truth exerts her power,
Some new phenomenon to raise;
Which, bursting on his frighted gaze,
From its proud summit to the ground
Proves the whole edifice unsound.
" Children," thus spoke a hare sedate,
Who oft had known th' extremes of fate,
" In slight events the docile mind
" May hints of good instruction find.
" That our condition is the worst,
" And we with such misfortunes cursed
" As all comparison defy,
" Was late the universal cry.
" When lo, an accident so slight
" As yonder little linnet's flight,
" Has made your stubborn hearts confess
" (So your amazement bids me guess)
" That all our load of woes and fears
" Is but a part of what he bears.
" Where can he rest secure from harms,
" Whom even a helpless hare alarms?
" Yet he repines not at his lot,
" When past the danger is forgot:
" On yonder bough he trims his wings,
" And with unusual rapture sings;

" While we, less wretched, sink beneath
" Our lighter ills, and rush to death.
" No more of this unmeaning rage,
" But hear, my friends, the words of age.
" When by the winds of autumn driven
" The scatter'd clouds fly cross the heaven,
" Oft have we, from some mountain's head,
" Beheld th' alternate light and shade
" Sweep the long vale. Here hovering lowers
" The shadowy cloud; there downwards pours;
" Streaming direct, a flood of day,
" Which from the view flies swift away;
" It flies, while other shades advance,
" And other streaks of sunshine glance.
" Thus chequer'd is the life below
" With gleams of joy and clouds of wo.
" Then hope not, while we journey on,
" Still to be basking in the sun:
" Nor fear, though now in shades ye mourn,
" That sunshine will no more return.
" If, by your terrours overcome,
" Ye fly before th' approaching gloom,
" The rapid clouds your flight pursue,
" And darkness still o'ercasts your view
" Who longs to reach the radiant plain
" Must onward urge his course amain;
" For doubly swift the shadow flies,
" When 'gainst the gale the pilgrim plies.

" At least be firm, and undismayed
" Maintain your ground! the fleeting shade
" Erelong spontaneous glides away,
" And gives you back th' enlivening ray.
" Lo, while I speak, our danger past!
" No more the shrill horn's angry blast
" Howls in our ear; the savage roar
" Of war and murder is no more.
" Then snatch the moment fate allows,
" Nor think of past or future woes."
He spoke; and hope revives; the lake
That instant one and all forsake,
In sweet amusement to employ
The present sprightly hour of joy.
Now from the western mountain's brow
Compass'd with clouds of various glow,
The sun a broader orb displays,
And shoots aslope his ruddy rays.
The lawn assumes a fresher green,
And dew drops spangle all the scene.
The balmy zephyr breathes along,
The shepherd sings his tender song,
With all their lays the groves resound,
And falling waters murmur round.
Discord and care were put to flight,
And all was peace, and calm delight.

EPITAPH:

Being part of an inscription for a monument to be erected by a gentleman to the memory of his lady.

FAREWEL, my best-beloved; whose heavenly mind
Genius with virtue, strength with softness join'd;
Devotion, undebased by pride or art,
With meek simplicity, and joy of heart;
Though sprightly, gentle; though polite, sincere;
And only of thyself a judge severe;
Unblamed, unequall'd in each sphere of life,
The tenderest Daughter, Sister, Parent, Wife.
In thee their Patroness th' afflicted lost;
Thy friends, their pattern, ornament, and boast;
And I—but ah, can words my loss declare,
Or paint th' extremes of transport and despair!
O Thou, beyond what verse or speech can tell,
My guide, my friend, my best-beloved, farewel!

ODE

ON LORD H**'S BIRTHDAY.

A MUSE, unskill'd in venal praise,
Unstain'd with flattery's art;
Who loves simplicity of lays
Breathed ardent from the heart;
While gratitude and joy inspire,
Resumes the long unpractised lyre,
To hail, O H**, thy Natal Morn:
No gaudy wreath of flowers she weaves,
But twines with oak the laurel leaves,
Thy cradle to adorn.

For not on beds of gaudy flowers
Thine ancestors reclined,
Where Sloth dissolves, and Spleen devours
All energy of mind.
To hurl the dart, to ride the car,
To stem the deluges of war,
And snatch from fate a sinking land;
Trample th' Invader's lofty crest,
And from his grasp the dagger wrest,
And desolating brand:

'Twas this, that raised th' illustrious Line
To match the first in fame!
A thousand years have seen it shine
With unabated flame.
Have seen thy mighty Sires appear
Foremost in Glory's high career,
The pride and pattern of the Brave.
Yet, pure from lust of blood their fire,
And from ambition's wild desire,
They triumph'd but to save.

The Muse with joy attends their way
The vale of peace along;
There to its Lord the village gay
Renews the grateful song.
Yon castle's glittering towers contain
No pit of wo, nor clanking chain,
Nor to the suppliant's wail resound;
The open doors the needy bless,
Th' unfriended hail their calm recess,
And gladness smiles around.

There to the sympathetick heart
Life's best delights belong,
To mitigate the mourner's smart,
To guard the weak from wrong.
Ye sons of Luxury, be wise:
Know, happiness for ever flies

The cold and solitary breast;
Then let the social instinct glow,
And learn to feel another's wo,
And in his joy be bless'd.

O yet, ere Pleasure plant her snare
For unsuspecting youth;
Ere Flattery her song prepare
To check the voice of Truth;
O may his country's guardian Power
Attend the slumbering Infant's bower,
And bright, inspiring dreams impart;
To rouse th' hereditary fire,
To kindle each sublime desire,
Exalt, and warm the heart.

Swift to reward a Parent's fears,
A Parent's hopes to crown,
Roll on in peace, ye blooming years,
That rear him to renown;
When in his finish'd form and face
Admiring multitudes shall trace
Each patrimonial charm combined,
The courteous yet majestick mien,
The liberal smile, the look serene,
The great and gentle mind.

Yet, though thou draw a nation's eyes,
And win a nation's love,
Let not thy towering mind despise
The village and the grove.
No slander there shall wound thy fame,
No ruffian take his deadly aim,
No rival weave the secret snare:
For Innocence with angel smile,
Simplicity that knows no guile,
And Love and Peace are there.

When winds the mountain oak assail,
And lay its glories waste,
Content may slumber in the vale,
Unconscious of the blast.
Through scenes of tumult while we roam,
The heart, alas! is ne'er at home,
It hopes in time to roam no more;
The mariner, not vainly brave,
Combats the storm, and rides the wave,
To rest at last on shore.

Ye proud, ye selfish, ye severe,
How vain your mask of state!
The good alone have joy sincere,
The good alone are great:

Great, when, amid the vale of peace,
They bid the plaint of sorrow cease,
And hear the voice of artless praise;
As when along the trophied plain
Sublime they lead the victor train,
While shouting nations gaze.

TO THE RIGHT HON.

LADY CHARLOTTE GORDON,

Dressed in a Tartan Scotch bonnet, with plumes, &c.

WHY, Lady, wilt thou bind thy lovely brow
With the dread semblance of that warlike helm,
That nodding plume, and wreath of various glow,
That graced the chiefs of Scotia's ancient realm?

Thou knowest that virtue is of power the source,
And all her magick to thy eyes is given;
We own their empire, while we feel their force,
Beaming with the benignity of heaven.

The plumy helmet, and the martial mien,
Might dignify Minerva's awful charms;
But more resistless far th' Idalian queen—
Smiles, graces, gentleness, her only arms!

THE HERMIT.

AT the close of the day, when the hamlet is still,
And mortals the sweets of forgetfulness prove,
When nought but the torrent is heard on the hill,
And nought but the nightingale's song in the grove:
'Twas thus, by the cave of the mountain afar,
While his harp rung symphonious, a Hermit began;
No more with himself or with nature at war,
He thought as a Sage, though he felt as a Man.

" Ah why, all abandon'd to darkness and wo,
" Why, lone Philomela, that languishing fall?
" For spring shall return, and a lover bestow,
" And sorrow no longer thy bosom inthral.
" But, if pity inspire thee, renew the sad lay,
" Mourn, sweetest complainer, man calls thee to mourn;
" O sooth him, whose pleasures like thine pass away.
" Full quickly they pass—but they never return.

" Now gliding remote, on the verge of the sky,
" The Moon half extinguished her crescent displays:
" But lately I mark'd, when majestick on high
" She shone, and the planets were lost in her blaze.

" Roll on, thou fair orb, and with gladness pursue
" The path that conducts thee to splendour again.
" But Man's faded glory what change shall renew!
" Ah fool! to exult in a glory so vain!

" 'Tis night, and the landscape is lovely no more;
" I mourn, but, ye woodlands, I mourn not for you;
" For morn is approaching, your charms to restore,
" Perfumed with fresh fragrance, and glittering with
" dew.
" Nor yet for the ravage of winter I mourn;
" Kind Nature the embryo blossom will save.
" But when shall Spring visit the mouldering urn!
" O when shall it dawn on the night of the grave!"

' 'Twas thus, by the glare of false Science betray'd,
' That leads, to bewilder; and dazzles, to blind;
' My thoughts wont to roam, from shade onward to
' shade,
' Destruction before me, and sorrow behind.
" O pity, great Father of light," then I cried,
" Thy creature who fain would not wander from Thee!
" Lo, humbled in dust, I relinquish my pride:
" From doubt and from darkness thou only canst free."

' And darkness and doubt are now flying away.
' No longer I roam in conjecture forlorn.

'So breaks on the traveller, faint, and astray,
'The bright and the balmy effulgence of morn.
'See Truth, Love, and Mercy, in triumph descending,
'And Nature all glowing in Eden's first bloom!
'On the cold cheek of Death smiles and roses are
'blending,
'And Beauty Immortal awakes from the tomb.'

MISCELLANIES.

BY JAMES HAY BEATTIE, A. M.

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF

HIS LIFE AND CHARACTER,

BY JAMES BEATTIE, LL. D.

TO THE HONOURABLE

COSMO GORDON, ESQ.

One of the Barons of his Majesty's Exchequer;

TO

SIR WILLIAM FORBES, BART.

Of Pitsligo;

TO

ROBERT ARBUTHNOT, ESQ.

Secretary to the Honourable Board of Trustees for Fisheries, Manufactures, and Improvements in Scotland;

AND TO

JAMES MERCER, ESQ.

Formerly Major of the Forty-ninth Regiment.

To you, MY DEAR FRIENDS, I beg leave to inscribe this little miscellany. To you its author was well known: ye were pleased, even from his childhood, to interest yourselves in his welfare: and towards you, on account of your eminent virtues and abilities, and of that unre-

served and uninterrupted friendship with which he knew ye had, for more than thirty years, honoured his father, his gratitude and veneration were peculiarly strong. These are the reasons which induce me to take the liberty of addressing you on the present occasion.

Of my conduct in making this collection there is one circumstance which may seem to need an apology; and that is, my putting together in the same volume pieces so different in style and character. I might say, that many writers and editors have done the same thing without incurring blame. But I have another and perhaps a better reason. I wished to give such proofs as could be had, and might be published, of the various talents of the author; and, for the sake of the example, to show, that, though studious and learned, he was neither austere nor formal;

and that in him the strictest piety and modesty were united with the utmost cheerfulness, and even playfulness, of disposition.

I have the honour to be,
Gentlemen,
Your ever-obliged and
Most faithful friend and servant,
JAMES BEATTIE.

OF THE

AUTHOR'S LIFE AND CHARACTER.

November 28, 1790.

I INTEND to write a short account of the life, education, and character, of my son now deceased. It will innocently, and perhaps not unprofitably, amuse some hours of this melancholy season, when my mind can settle on nothing else; and, whether it be published or not, a circumstance on which I have as yet formed no resolution, it will be an acceptable present to those to whom I may send it. The account, though drawn up by the hand of a friend, will not in any particular be erroneous. In order to convey a favourable notion of the person of whom I speak, I have nothing to do, but to tell the simple truth.

JAMES HAY BEATTIE was born in Aberdeen the sixth of November, in the year one thousand seven hundred and sixty eight. He was baptized *James Hay*, by permission of JAMES HAY EARL OF ERROL, who had patronized me at an early period of my life, and ever after honoured me

with his friendship: a nobleman, who, to a competent knowledge of classical learning, and other accomplishments becoming his rank, joined uncommon elegance, dignity and affability of manners; with benevolence unbounded; an exemplary regard to the institutions of religion; and a spirit of true patriotism, whereof those parts of his country, with which he was connected, do still feel, and it is hoped will long feel, the salutary influence.

To parents and other near relations, infancy is very interesting; but can hardly supply any thing of narrative. My son's was in no respect remarkable, unless, perhaps, for a mildness and docility of nature, which adhered to him through life. I do not remember that I ever had occasion to reprove him above three or four times: bodily chastisement he never experienced at all. It would indeed have been most unreasonable to apply this mode of discipline to one, whose supreme concern it ever was to know his duty and to do it.

The first rules of morality I taught him were, to speak truth, and keep a secret; and I never found that in a single instance he transgressed either.

The doctrines of religion I wished to impress on his mind, as soon as it might be prepared to

receive them; but I did not see the propriety of making him commit to memory theological sentences, or any sentences, which it was not possible for him to understand. And I was desirous to make a trial how far his own reason could go in tracing out, with a little direction, the great and first principle of all religion, the being of God. The following fact is mentioned, not as a proof of superiour sagacity in him (for I have no doubt that most children would in like circumstances think as he did), but merely as a moral or logical experiment.

He had reached his fifth [or sixth] year, knew the alphabet, and could read a little; but had received no particular information with respect to the Author of his being: because I thought he could not yet understand such information; and because I had learned from my own experience, that to be made to repeat words not understood is extremely detrimental to the faculties of a young mind. In a corner of a little garden, without informing any person of the circumstance, I wrote in the mould, with my finger, the three initial letters of his name; and, sowing garden cresses in the furrows, covered up the seed, and smoothed the ground. Ten days after, he came running to me,

and with astonishment in his countenance told me, that his name was growing in the garden. I smiled at the report, and seemed inclined to disregard it; but he insisted on my going to see what had happened. Yes, said I, carelessly, on coming to the place, I see it is so; but there is nothing in this worth notice; it is mere chance: and I went away. He followed me, and, taking hold of my coat, said with some earnestness, it could not be mere chance; for that some body must have contrived matters so as to produce it. —I pretend not to give his words, or my own, for I have forgotten both; but I give the substance of what passed between us in such language as we both understood.—So you think, I said, that what appears so regular as the letters of your name cannot be by chance. Yes, said he, with firmness, I think so. Look at yourself, I replied, and consider your hands and fingers, your legs and feet, and other limbs; are they not regular in their appearance, and useful to you? He said, they were. Came you then hither, said I, by chance? No, he answered, that cannot be; something must have made me. And who is that something, I asked. He said, he did not know. (I took particular notice, that he did not say, as Rousseau fancies a child in like circumstances would say, that his parents made him.) I had

now gained the point I aimed at: and saw, that his reason taught him, (though he could not so express it) that what begins to be must have a cause, and that what is formed with regularity must have an intelligent cause. I therefore told him the name of the Great Being who made him and all the world; concerning whose adorable nature I gave him such information as I thought he could in some measure comprehend. The lesson affected him greatly, and he never forgot either it, or the circumstance that introduced it.

At home, from his mother and me he learned to read and write. His pronunciation was not correct, as may well be supposed: but it was deliberate and significant, free from provincial peculiarities, and such as an Englishman would have understood; and afterwards, when he had passed a few summers in England, it became more elegant than what is commonly heard in North Britain. He was early warned against the use of Scotch words and other similar improprieties; and his dislike to them was such, that he soon learned to avoid them; and, after he grew up, could never endure to read what was written in any of the vulgar dialects of Scotland.

When he had completed his seventh year, being now a good reader, a ready writer, and

well acquainted with the catechism published by the pious and learned Dr. Watts, I made him attend the grammar school of Aberdeen; where he acquired, with facility and exactness, the elements of the Latin tongue, and read those parts of the classick authors which are usually taught in our schools. About the same time he studied at home with me some of the best tales in Ovid's Metamorphosis, and several books of Virgil. I was at particular pains to instruct him in certain niceties of the grammatical and critical art, which are not found in the most common grammars, and by little and little to initiate him in the principles of universal or philosophical grammar. This, he told me afterwards, was of great use to him. Ovid did not much engage his attention, though he was well enough pleased with Deucalion's deluge, Phaeton, Cadmus, Acteon and his dogs; but it was easy to see, from the interest he took in Virgil's narrative, and the emphasis with which, of his own accord, he pronounced his verses, that he was wonderfully affected with the harmony and other excellencies of that poet. He has told me since, that he then got by heart several entire books of the Eneid, and took great delight in repeating them when at leisure and alone: and he often, about this time, spoke with peculiar com-

placency of that description of night, in the fourth book (v. 522) which he said he frequently recollected, in order to sooth his mind, when any troublesome thought occurred in the night to discompose him.

Drawing he was early accustomed to, and attained considerable proficiency in: but his other avocations, and his being subject to headachs, prevented his applying to it so much as to become a very great proficient. The theory of perspective was familiar to him. In ludicrous *caricatura* he had boundless invention.

Knowing that his constitution was very delicate, and finding him inclined to study rather too much than too little, I was careful, in the first part, and indeed through the whole, of his life, not only to caution him against immoderate study, by informing him of its dreadful consequences; but also to contrive for him such amusement as would decoy him from his books, strengthen his body, and engage his mind. With this view as soon as he could handle a small musquet, I put him under the tuition of a sergeant, who taught him the military exercise. Not long after, I made him attend an expert fencing master, till he became very skilful in the management of the small sword. Archery, likewise, or shooting with the long bow, he prac-

tised for years, and with good success, reading Roger Ascham on the subject; and acquiring at the same time great dexterity in the use of the sling: and to these ancient exercises he added those of fishing and fowling. With firearms I did not trust him rashly; but he was to such a degree attentive and considerate, that before his fifteenth year I found him as worthy of that trust as any person could be. He laboured for several weeks in endeavouring to learn to swim, and had at that time a companion who was completely master of the art: but it appeared at last that the chilness of the sea water did him more harm than good.

The exercise to which he seemed to have the strongest disinclination was dancing. By my advice he attended a master of it for many months, and I believe made the usual progress; but, on leaving that school, begged I would never desire him to dance: a favour which I readily granted. I know not whether he had adopted Cicero's opinion,* that no man dances who is not either drunk or mad: but he told me, that to his habits of thinking and feeling it was extremely incongruous, being in most particulars too finical, and in every particular too ostentatious.

* Pro Muraena.

He left off fowling, when about the age of seventeen; in his papers of that time I find hints of his being not quite satisfied of its lawfulness. Fishing, however, he did not discontinue; he made indeed a study of it, or at least of Isaac Walton's very ingenious and entertaining book on that subject; for he thought there could be no sin in doing what was practised, or countenanced by the first teachers of christianity. Those sorts of it he never engaged in, which give great pain, or protract the sufferings of the poor animal. In all the little manufactures of the angler he was completely skilled; as well as in all the arts of the fowler, even to the training of a setting dog. This, with many other trifling particulars (as some would think them) I mention, that the reader may see, it was not my purpose to force him, by too rapid a progress, from childhood into permature manhood; which I have seen attempted by wellmeaning parents, but never with desirable success: I wished him to prepare himself, in early youth, by little and little, for acting the part of a man; but, in the meantime, not to forget that he was a boy.

At the age of thirteen, having passed through the forms of the grammar school, giving the utmost satisfaction to all his masters, he was entered a student in Marischal college. The first,

or *Greek*, class, as it is called, he attended two years; as I was anxious that he should be a proficient in that noble language, which is everywhere too much neglected: so that, as a student of languages, mathematicks, and philosophy, he attended college five years: a year more than is usually thought necessary in Scotland, or at least in the university of Marischal college, to qualify one for the first academical degree, of Master of Arts. He studied Greek under Mr. Professor Stuart; natural and civil history under Dr. Skene; natural philosophy under Mr. Professor Copland; mathematicks, under Dr. Hamilton; chemistry, under Dr. French; and moral philosophy, logick, and rhetorick, under my care. In all the sciences, his proficiency was so great, that the fondest and most ambitious parent could not have wished it greater: and his whole behaviour, at school and college, was not only irreproachable, but exemplary. He was admitted to the degree of master of arts in April 1786.

About this time, the botanical and other writings of Linnæus caught his attention, and he studied them with great assiduity and delight: being much assisted in that study by his and my learned friends Dr. Campbell, principal of Marischal college, and Dr. Laing, minister of the church of England congregation at Peterhead.

Theology also he studied under the care of Dr. Campbell and Dr. Gerard. But this was not the commencement of his theological pursuits; for from his early youth he had studied the holy scriptures, which he justly thought to contain the only infallible system of christian faith. When he went from home, if he meant to be absent a few weeks or days, he took with him a pocket bible and the Greek New Testament: and among his papers I find a little book of remarks on the Hebrew grammar; from which it appears he had made progress in that language.

On the fourth of June one thousand seven hundred and eighty seven, his majesty, upon the recommendation of the university of Marischal college, was pleased to appoint him assistant professor of moral philosophy and logick. His age was then not quite nineteen; but to the gentlemen of the university his character was so well known, that they most readily, as well as unanimously, concurred in the recommendation. It may be thought, that I chose for him this way of life; and indeed I did so: but not till after he had given me the most explicit assurance, that he preferred it to every other. When I told him, that in this station he might be very useful, but could never be rich; his answer was, that he had never wished to be rich, and that to

be useful was his highest ambition. His fondness for an academical life I had long observed: and, although I knew him sufficiently qualified to be a professor of any of the sciences usually taught in universities, except law and physick, (in both which, however, he had made considerable progress) I saw, with no little satisfaction, that moral philosophy, and the sciences allied to it, were the most congenial to his talents and character.

On being inducted into his office he thought it his duty to lay for some time other studies aside, and apply himself, solely or chiefly, to what he thought might be the business of his life. This, considering what he had already acquired of the moral sciences, I knew to be unnecessary, and told him so; desiring him to amuse himself with lighter studies, till his bodily constitution should be more firmly established. He followed my advice; but at spare hours read the best writers on the abstract philosophy, particularly Dr. Reid, Dr. Campbell, bishop Butler, Dr. Clarke, and Mr. Baxter, author of an excellent treatise on the incorporeal nature of the human soul. When I asked whether he understood Baxter, and Butler, and Clarke's demonstration *a priori* of the Divine Existence, telling him that I had formerly thought them

not a little abstruse, he said he was not sensible of their abstruseness; for that to the same modes of thinking he had been accustomed for several years: and I found by his conversation, and have since found more particularly by the papers he has left, that he understood them perfectly.

He had before this time acquired the elements of musical performance; I advised him now to apply to it with assiduity; knowing, by my own experience, that after the fatigue of study it might be an innocent and useful recreation. He did so; and learned to perform with good expression upon the organ and violin; studying at the same time the theory of the art, in the works of Pasquali and Holden; and, that he might see the theory exemplified, perusing, with his wonted accuracy, some of the most elegant and affecting compositions of Handel, Corelli, Geminiani, Avison, and Jackson. These were the musical authors who stood highest in his esteem. The musick just now in vogue had no charms for him: he said it wanted simplicity, pathos, and harmony; and in the execution depended so much on rapidity of finger, or what may be called slight of hand, that practitioners must throw away more time than he could spare, before they could acquire any dexterity in it. He was delighted with the sweet and classical

correctness of Corelli; and with the affecting melodies of Jackson, so well adapted to the words that accompany them: but the variety and sublimity of Handel's invention filled him with rapture and astonishment. He thought him the Shakspeare of musick, or rather the Shakspeare and Milton united; and many of his simpler songs he could sing very agreeably, enforcing their expression with a thorough base on the organ. He was pleased too with some of the ancient Scotch and Welch airs; but made no account of the quick jigging Scotch tunes, though he did not think them all equally bad. He had studied *counterpoint* and was profoundly skilled in it; I find among his papers a great deal written on that subject; and I have seen fugues of his contrivance which would not have discredited a more experienced musician. When I asked what made him think of studying the theory as well as practice of musick, he said, that, as it was impossible, without knowing prosody, and the laws of versification, to have a just sense of the harmony of Homer and Virgil, so he thought he could not be suitably affected with musical harmony, if he did not understand the principles on which it is constructed. I shall only add, with respect to musick, that, though I recommended it to him, I would by no means do so to all indis-

criminately. To such young persons as are in any degree ostentatious, or inclined, more than they ought to be, to amusement and company, I think it a dangerous study.

Though my son was now my assistant and colleague, it was not my intention to devolve upon him any of the duties of my office; those excepted for which I might be disqualified by bad health. For I had long taken pleasure in the employment; and I wished him to be a little further advanced in life, before he should be engaged in the more laborious parts of it. My health, however, during the winter $17\frac{87}{88}$ was in such a state, that recovery seemed doubtful; and he was obliged, sooner than I wished, to give proof of ability in his profession. In this respect he acquitted himself, as in all others. His steadiness, goodnature, and command of temper, secured his authority as a teacher; and by his presence of mind, and ready recollection, he satisfied his audience that, though young, he was abundantly qualified to instruct them. The talents that form a publick speaker he possessed in an eminent degree. As he could not allow himself to study any thing superficially, all his knowledge was accurate, and in his memory so well arranged, that he was never at a loss; his language perspicuous and correct, flowing easi-

ly, without hesitation, hurry, or apparent effort; his voice distinct and manly; his manner never declamatory, or ostentatious, but simple, concise, and to the purpose: and he was at all times singularly happy in recollecting familiar examples to illustrate his subject. In this last respect; I mean in passing instantaneously from one thought or image to another that was *like it;* he possessed such exuberance and correctness of fancy, especially in familiar conversation, that I have often thought, if he had been ambitious to appear in the world as a *man of wit*, that he would not have met with many superiours. But he had no such ambition: he would amuse himself in this way, to divert me, or any other intimate friend; but could not bear to draw upon himself publick notice.

In general company, indeed, he was (though not awkward) modest to a degree that bordered on bashfulness; and so silent, that some people would have thought him inattentive. But nothing escaped his observation; though what he had observed he never applied to any improper purpose. And I have known, not any other person of his, and very few persons of any, age, who with so penetrating an eye discerned the characters of men. I, who knew his opinions on all subjects, do not remember any instance of

his being in this respect mistaken. Yet so careful was he to avoid giving offence, that none, but a few of his most intimate friends, knew that he had such a talent. I know not whether I ought to mention, that in what is called mimickry he exceeded almost every other person I have known. But my advice was not necessary to prevent his cultivating that art. On the stage it may have its use; but in private life he knew how improper it is, and how dangerous; and of his own accord left it off entirely, with my hearty approbation.

Although with a few minutes of preparation, and a few written notes, (as he wrote shorthand with the utmost readiness) he could qualify himself sufficiently for giving an hour's lecture on most topicks that occur in moral philosophy and logick, yet he wished to comprehend the whole course in a series of written prelections. The composing of these would, he rightly thought, make him master of his business; and to these, when they were composed, he could trust as a provision, if bad health should at any time render him unequal to the effort of lecturing extempore. But of this plan he did not live to execute the tenth part.

To make the young scholar perform exercises in Latin verse, is not now customary, so far as

I know, in any of the schools of North Britain: which I have long thought a deficiency in our discipline. I wished him to attempt this mode of composition, resolving, however, not to urge it, if he should find it difficult. Accordingly, as soon as I knew him to be sufficiently master of ancient prosody, I advised him to write Latin verses. He said, he did not think he could do it, but that, since I desired it, he would make a trial, provided I gave him a subject. A lobster happening to be on the table, I proposed that as the argument of his first essay; and next day he brought me four hexameters, which, considering his age and experience (for he was then only fourteen,) I thought tolerable; and I encouraged him to make further trials, when he should find himself in the humour and at leisure. He continued from time to time to amuse himself in this way, and soon acquired a facility in it. He found it, he said, of the greatest advantage in giving him a ready command of Latin phraseology; by obliging him to think in that language, and to revolve in his mind a variety of synonymous expressions, while in quest of that which would suit the measure and sound of his verse. It must not be imagined that he lost much time in this study. He applied to it very seldom, and when he had nothing else to

do, and never, for so I advised, above half an hour in one day. Being urged by me to declare how much he might do in that half hour, he owned, with a modest reluctance natural to him on such occasions, that in half an hour he would sometimes compose from ten to fifteen or twenty lines. Were all the half hours he ever employed in this exercise to be thrown into one sum, they would not amount to fourteen days.

Among his Latin compositions, I find one or two original odes, and some epistles in imitation of Horace;* and translations of several favourite English songs, of some detached stanzas from the *Castle of Indolence*, and of some parts of the *Minstrel*. Whether he purposed to make a complete version of this last poem, I know not: his partiality to it was no doubt excessive; which the goodnatured reader will pardon.

In November 1786 he translated into Latin verse Pope's *Elegy* on an unfortunate lady, and the *Messiah* of the same poet. The former was printed, but without a name; the latter never re-

* The most humorous, and one of the longest, of his poetical essays, is a Latin epistle (in imitation of Horace) giving a description of a public entertainment: but to private characters, though it is not satirical, it has so many allusions, that I suppress it, as I know he himself would have done.

ceived his last emendations. In both these pieces, as well as in the version of *Sir Balaam*, the translation has the same number of lines with the original. His notions of translation were as strict as those of Horace;* he thought it should be as literal as the genius of the language into which

* It is strange that the passage of Horace here alluded to (Epist ad. Pison. v. 133.) should have been so generally understood to mean just the contrary of what the poet intended; as if he had been there laying down rules for *translation*, and disapproving of literal or close translations. The meaning of those words, *Nec verbum verbo curabis reddere fidus Interpres*, viewed in their connection with what immediately goes before and follows, is this: "It is difficult and hazardous to invent new fables and characters; and a dramatick poet may do "better to take the subject of his piece from Homer, "than to make the whole of it new. But, in doing this, "that he may not incur the blame of exhibiting as his "own what belongs to another, he must be careful, "first, not to make his fable exactly the same with that "of the original author; secondly, not to translate his "words *literally, as a faithful interpreter would do;* and "lastly, to conduct his play according to the genius not "of epick but of tragick composition."—Terence was not ashamed of having translated literally: (see Prolog. ad Adelph.) and they who are acquainted with that author will not suppose, either that his translations were inelegant; or that they would have been more elegant if they had been less literal.

it is made will permit; and that, as closely as possible, it should imitate the spirit, especially the simplicity and conciseness, and (if poetical) the harmony, of the original. Of paraphrastical, or, as they have been called, *free* translations, he did not approve. He thought the *freedom* of such interpreters might be occasioned rather by want of critical skill in their own or their author's language, than by correctness of taste or luxuriancy of genius: at any rate, whether meant to conceal ignorance, or improve the original author, he thought that such versions were misrepresentations, and therefore unjustifiable. On this principle he must have condemned some juvenile attempts of mine: but I have reason to think he never saw them; and I was too much ashamed of them to direct his attention that way.

The poetical translation he admired most was Dobson's *Paradisus Amissus;* which is indeed more exact, more spirited, more elegant, and more like its original, than any other I have seen: I cannot account for its being so much neglected. He also esteemed very highly Mr. Potter's translations of the Greek tragedies. In the Virgil of Dryden he owned there were good lines; but was disgusted with that translator's inattention, in too many places, to the sense, and still more conspicuous inattention, to the

spirit, of his original. Of Pope's Homer he may have read parts, but never I think went through the whole. He thought it a pleasing English poem, but by no means a faithful exhibition of the genius of Homer. On his own attempts in translation he set no value. He engaged in them as exercises merely, for improving himself, or amusing me; and when he had put them in my hand, and heard what I thought of them, which I own was always favourable, he commonly left them with me, and made no further inquiry about them. The version of Pope's Unfortunate Lady was printed by my desire, and almost against his will: it was never published; but I sent copies of it to some of our friends.

The reader has seen my motive for recommending as an exercise the composition of Latin verses. I had not the same reason for wishing him to engage in English poetry. And I had known instances of young men mistaking the talent of writing smooth verses (a talent which may be easily acquired) for poetical genius; and thence following that idle trade to their own great disadvantage. I had therefore determined, in case of his attempting it, to dissuade the attempt, if I did not see in his first essays undoubted indications of poetical invention, with numbers animated, and varied accord-

ing to the subject: and such dissuasion from me I knew *he* would receive with thankfulness, and without being either disheartened or offended.

Among his Latin Poems, there is an Alcaick or Horatian ode on Peterhead, which at my desire he translated into English verse. It contains an elegant though brief account of the scenery and society which he met with in that town and neighbourhood. He had an attachment to Peterhead, and wished to pass part of every summer there; in which I was always willing to indulge him. The causes of this attachment were neither few nor trivial. The air of the place had several times restored his health, when it was declining: the kind attentions shown him by the better sort of the people, and their modest and simple manners, had won his heart: and the situation of the town, almost surrounded by the sea, and in the neighbourhood of a pleasant river and of some of the finest downs in Great Britian, was very favourable to fishing, rowing, archery, shooting, walking, and other exercises in which he delighted. Here, too, he had the company and conversation of our learned and pious friend the reverend doctor William Laing; who loved him with great affection; taught him many things relating to physick, botany, mechanicks,

musick, &c.; and took a particular pleasure in devising expedients to amuse him.*

One of the greatest attempts he ever made in poetry was a didactic poem in English, on the excellency of the christian religion, and its peculiar efficacy in improving and perfecting the human soul. He meant, if I mistake not, to extend it to three books; the first of which, consisting of about six hundred lines, had been

* As an evidence of this gentleman's attachment, I take the liberty to quote the following passage from a letter which he sent me a few weeks after my son's death. "As to any memorials of my dear friend, I have no need of them for keeping up the remembrance of him. There is not a corner in my house, where I do not find his handwriting intermixed with mine: there is not an article of any study or science that I can think on, where I do not find his sentiments and mine embodied together, and in regard to which I do not immediately think what he would have said upon the subject. And not only do I find him everywhere within the house; but also, when I go into the fields, there is not a spot of ground that does not remind me of him: nay, I no sooner fix my attention upon any plant, than it brings into my mind when and where we first settled its *genus* and *species*. How I shall be able to bear the view of our summer haunts and walks without his company, if it should please God to spare me to see them, I do not yet know; but the thought of it is at present very painful to me."

sketched out before I heard of it. This was, I believe, his first *serious* effort in English verse. I was much pleased with the sentiments, and I own, not a little surprised (considering the author's age) at the energy of expression, vivacity of description, and apposite variety of numbers, that appeared in several passages. On the whole I was satisfied, that he had a poetical genius; which, when matured by years, and improved by practice, might, I fondly thought, produce something considerable. But diffident of my own opinion, which in a case of this kind might naturally enough be liable to undue influence, I showed it to some friends; who I thought would be more impartial, as they were more competent, judges. They were pleased to think of it even more highly than I did, and gave him every encouragement to persevere. His absence, however, from home, and various avocations, caused a long intermission of the work: and, when those difficulties were removed, his anxiety to prepare himself for a right discharge of his duty as a professor, determined him to lay aside for some time this favourite project; and I heard nothing of it for a great while. About a year before his death, I asked him what was become of it. He said, that, as soon as he had disengaged himself from his present course of

study, he intended to resume, and, if possible, to finish it, and that he had it much at heart to do so: "but," continued he, "I shall make ma-"terial alterations in the plan, and I believe "there is hardly a line that will not undergo "correction." When, after his death, I called to mind this circumstance, and found, on inspecting his papers, that no alteration had been made (the reason of which will presently appear), I was at first inclined, in justice to his memory, to suppress the whole. It was, however, suggested, that this would be rather injurious to his memory: that it was right it should be known that he had such a design, and had formed such a plan: that extracts from the poem would throw light on his character, and do honour both to his heart and to his understanding: and that there was no reason to fear, that the severity of criticism would ever be exerted against a performance, written (hastily, I believe, though with a benevolent purpose) at the age of seventeen, and of which the author's subsequent studies and early death had prevented even the revisal.

Of his ludicrous verses (the greater part of which will never appear) I have little to say, but that most of them were written for my amusement, though few by my desire, and all

with surprising facility. I shall give one example. While he and I were talking one evening of the humorous English ballad that begins with these words "Diogenes surly and proud," &c.; in which, from peculiarities in the lives and doctrines of the ancient philosophers, it is proved, by ironical arguments, that they must all have been addicted to drinking; I happened to say, it was pity our modern sages were not in the same way celebrated in a second part. Two days after he brought me the stanzas that have the name of *The modern tippling Philosophers;* in which the spirit of the old ballad seems to be supported with equal humour, and certainly not inferior learning.

Observing, early in the year 1788, that his health had suffered from the fatigues of the winter, and much more, I believe, from anxiety on account of my illness; and knowing, that he had a genius in mechanicks, and was master of the theory of organ building; I proposed, that he should pass the ensuing summer at Peterhead, and there, with Dr. Laing's assistance, superintend the building of an organ for himself. This was in due time executed. The work employed him about five months; and the amusement he derived from it, and the musick with which it afterwards supplied him, had the hap-

piest effects on his constitution. And, to complete his satisfaction, my health had become better: and the organ, when he had set it up, and tuned it, was found to be singularly good in its kind. We had now little musical entertainments twice or thrice a week; which, though to a modish audience they might have appeared unfashionable, were highly pleasing to us, and to those friends who were sometimes present at them. Three of our small band could sing pretty well; and to the instrumental part of the concert a violin, violoncello, and organ, gave tolerable variety.

Some weeks before the commencement of his last illness, he asked whether I had any objection to his studying physick. I was a little alarmed at the question, and asked in my turn, whether upon trial he had found his office in the college less agreeable than he thought it would be. "Quite the contrary," he replied, "I have "found it even more to my mind than I expec-"ted." He proceeded to explain himself, to the best of my remembrance, in the following words. "I foresee that when I shall have prepared a "few lectures, our long summer vacation will "afford me abundance of leisure. It is true "that, in the study of nature and art, a man can "never be without the means of improvement

" and liberal recreation. But there is a duty more
" indispensable, which I am anxious to have it
" in my power to discharge; I mean, that of re-
" lieving the sufferings of my fellow creatures.
" To appear in the world as a physician, or
" to accept of money for what I may do in a
" medical character, is not my plan: Providence
" has so ordered matters, that I can live, as well
" as I wish to live, without that: but I would fain
" be useful, occasionally to my friends, and to the
" poor especially; for whom however I will not
" take it upon me to prescribe, till I shall have
" gone through a complete course of medical
" study." I told him it was impossible for me to ob-
ject to a scheme undertaken from motives so lau-
dable: " all the restraint I would impose, added I,
" is, what to you I am continually recommending,
" moderate application. Anatomy, botany, che-
" mistry, you already know, and are not igno-
" rant of pharmacy. Study physick, therefore,
" since you desire it; but let it be now and then
" only, when you are at leisure; and you will
" soon be as great a proficient as many others
" are, who acquit themselves in that profession
" both creditably and usefully." It appears from
his papers, that he had been very eager to pre-
pare himself for doing good in this new employ-
ment. But the time was now at hand, when all his

plans of benevolence were to cease, and all his pursuits in literature.

In the night of the thirtieth of November 1789 he was suddenly seized with a violent fit of fever, attended with excessive trembling and shivering, such as seemed to threaten his immediate dissolution. Medical assistance was instantly procured, and before morning a perspiration ensued, which freed him from fever, but left him weak and languid. This night must be considered as the end of his literary career; for, though he lived almost a year longer, he was never after able to engage in study that required any energy of mind. From this time to his death the night sweats continued to molest him, though they were not often violent: and now a decline came on, wonderfully gradual, though it seemed in general to gain a little ground every week. He made, however, his daily excursions; and in February was still able to walk a few miles without fatigue. Attempts were made to prepare him for a journey in a post chaise; but without success: every experiment of this kind, however cautiously conducted, being followed by a fit of fever unusually severe. Riding on horseback he had never found beneficial, and at this time could not bear at all. Still, however, it was supposed, by the

physicians, as well as by himself, and by me, as he had no cough, nor difficulty in breathing, nor indeed any positive pain, that nothing worse was the matter than what is called a relaxation of the nervous system; and that, when the season would permit, a few weeks of Peterhead would set him up again, as had happened to him several times in cases apparently similar. To get thither he was more anxious than I ever saw him about any other thing that concerned himself. Thither accordingly he went the nineteenth of April, and he bore the journey better than I expected. But next day a dreadful storm set in of rain and wind, which continued a week, during which it was impossible for him to leave his room. This confinement broke down his strength so much, that he could no longer walk without leaning on somebody's arm; nor bear the motion of a carriage, unless it went very slowly. His case was now called a *nervous atrophy;* and the physicians candidly informed me that, though not desperate, it was dangerous in the extreme. I need not give a detail of the transactions of the summer. Let it suffice to say, that he had every advantage that could be derived from the most skilful and affectionate physicians, particularly Sir Alexander Bannerman, Dr. Skene, Dr. Gregory, Dr. Laing, and

Mr. Wilson, surgeon, who was his intimate friend, and who not only attended, but almost constantly sat by him the four last months of his life. By the goodness of Providence, every thing was procured for him that the physicians recommended. Twice I went with him to sea; and the first attempt (an excursion of ten leagues from Peterhead to Aberdeen) succeeded so well, that he was anxious to make a second; which, however, had, as I feared it would have, disagreeable consequences, though nothing materially pernicious followed it. In the end of June, a cough made its appearance; and it was then I began to lose hopes of his recovery, as I have reason to think he also did: he saw death approaching, and met it with his usual calmness and resignation. "How pleasant a "medicine is christianity!" he said one evening, while he was expecting the physician, whom he had sent for, in the belief that he was just going to expire. Sometimes he would endeavour to reconcile my mind to the thought of parting with him; but, for fear of giving me pain, spoke seldom and sparingly on that subject. His composure he retained, as well as the full use of his rational faculties, to the last; nor did his wit and humour forsake him, till he was no longer able to smile, or even to speak except in

a whisper. His last allusion to literature, and probably the last time his favourite Virgil occurred to his mind, was on occasion of some difference of opinion happening when he was present, between Mr. Wilson and me, about the meaning of a Greek word. To give him a little amusement, I referred the matter to him. Ah! said he with a smile, (finding himself unable to say more) Fuimus Troes.

One day, long before the little incident last mentioned, when I was sitting by him, soon after our second return from sea, he began to speak in very affectionate terms, as he often did, of what he called my goodness to him. I begged him to drop that subject, and was proceeding to tell him I had never done any thing for him but what duty required and inclination prompted; and that for the little I had done his filial piety and other virtues were to me more than a sufficient recompense,—when he interrupted me (which he was not apt to do) and, starting up, with inexpressible fervour and solemnity, implored the blessings of God upon me. His look at that moment, though I shall never forget it, I can describe in no other way than by saying, that it seemed to have in it something more than human, and what I may, not very improperly perhaps, call angelick. See-

ing me agitated, he expressed concern for what he had done, and said that, whatever might be in his mind, he would not any more put my feelings to so severe a trial. Sometimes, however, warm sentiments of gratitude would break from him: and those were the only occasions on which, during the whole course of his illness, he was observed to shed tears;—till the day before his death; when he desired to see his brother, gave him his blessing, wept over him, and bid him farewel.

As his life drew towards a close, his pains abated considerably, and he passed a good deal of time in sleep. When I asked him whether his dreams where distressing, he said, "No; for "he sometimes dreamed of walking with me; "which was an idea peculiarly soothing to his "mind."

At seven in the morning of the nineteenth of November, 1790, he said his throat was dry, and desired a draught to be given him. Mr. Wilson stept to the table to fetch it; but, before he got back to the bedside, the last breath was emitted, without a groan or even a sigh.

Over his grave, in the churchyard of St. Nicolas in Aberdeen, is erected a piece of marble, with the following inscription:

JACOBO. HAY. BEATTIE. JACOBI. F.
PHILOS. IN. ACAD. MARISCHAL. PROFESSORI.
ADOLESCENTI.
EA. MODESTIA.
EA. SUAVITATE. MORUM.
EA. BENEVOLENTIA. ERGA. OMNES.
EA. ERGA. DEUM. PIETATE.
UT. HUMANUM. NIHIL. SUPRA.
IN. BONIS. LITERIS.
IN. THEOLOGIA.
IN. OMNI. PHILOSOPHIA.
EXERCITATISSIMO.
POETÆ. INSUPER.
REBUS. IN. LEVIORIBUS. FACETO.
IN. GRANDIORIBUS. SUBLIMI.
QUI. PLACIDAM. ANIMAM. EFFLAVIT.
XIX. NOVEMB. MDCCXC.
ANNOS. HABENS. XXII. DIESQUE. XIII.
PATER. MOERENS. H. M. P.
* * * * * * * * * * *
MONTAGU. BEATTIE.
JACOBI. HAY. BEATTIE. FRATER.
EJUSQUE. VIRTUTUM. ET. STUDIORUM.
ÆMULUS.
SEPULCHRIQUE. CONSORS.
VARIARUM. PERITUS. ARTIUM.
PINGENDI. IMPRIMIS.
NATUS. OCTAVO. JULII. MDCCLXXVIII.
MULTUM. DEFLETUS. OBIIT.
DECIMO. QUARTO. MARTII. MDCCXCVI.

Of James Hay Beattie's character and opinions I shall subjoin some further particulars, which could not be conveniently introduced in the preceding narrative. I set them down as they occur, without attempting arrangement.

Piety and meekness were striking features in his character, habitual to him in infancy, and through life. I find among his papers forms of devotion, composed for his own use. The christian religion and its evidences he had studied with indefatigable application; and the consequence was such, as may be always expected in like cases, where the inquirer has candour and sense: no person could love his religion more than he did, or believe in it with fuller assurance of faith. But in his behaviour there was no austerity or singularity. Even when he came to be a man, he had, when in health, and in the company of his intimate friends, all the playfulness of a boy. The effect of religion upon his mind was, to make him cheerful, considerate, benevolent, intrepid, humble, and happy. Of the contracted principles and unamiable prejudices of sectaries he had no conception. He loved all the human race; he bore a particular love to all christians; and he wished all parties to exercise christian charity towards each other. The church of England he held in high veneration, and was

also attached to the church of Scotland in which he had been educated; he knew that, in respect of doctrine, the principles of both are the same; and, as to the different forms of ecclesiastical discipline and worship, he did not think he had any right to affect singularity, or to molest the peace of either church by clamouring about matters of no essential importance. He wished to be, and to be considered as, a CHRISTIAN: a title, which he thought infinitely more honourable than any other. The words Lutheran and Calvinist he well understood, but set no value on them; though he was ever ready to own his obligations to those learned men who had been instrumental in bringing about the reformation from popery.

Of modern divines his greatest favourite was Dr. Clarke. He studied all that author's works with his usual accuracy, and with much delight. Even the controversy with Dodwell he studied; for he thought it strictly connected with what Baxter and others had taught concerning the incorporeal nature of the soul: a doctrine, of which he was a zealous defender; which he had examined as far, I believe, as human ingenuity can examine it; and on which he has left a great deal in writing, though nothing finished.

I spoke of his playfulness. In conversation

with his particular friends he would display an amazing exuberance of pleasantry and humour. His knowledge of nature and extensive learning supplied him with innumerable images; and his lively fancy, aided by simplicity of diction and a ready eloquence, enabled him to combine them into the most diverting forms that could be imagined.* He had, what perhaps all people of observation have, a slight tendency to satire; but it was of the gentlest kind; he had too much candour and goodnature to be either a general satirist or a severe one. That taunting, gibing, raillery, which some people, who mistake illnature for wit, are so fond of, he despised and hated: he often, as his duty required, spoke in order to improve and amend others; but never uttered a word with a view to give pain. Characters, however, there were, of which he was at no pains to conceal what he thought. If persons, notoriously profligate; or who in publick office seemed to him to have betrayed their trust; or who, rendered impudent by immorality and ignorance, ventured to retail the

* Several passages of this preface I have found copied, and without acknowledgment applied to another person. See Anderson's Edition of British Poets, quoted in the Monthly Review for September 1798, page 18, &c.

wretched impieties of infidelity;—if such persons happened to be spoken of in his hearing, it was easy to perceive, that his abstaining from general satire was owing to the want, not of talents, but of inclination.

I mentioned that acuteness of intellect, which enabled him to enter with facility into the abstrusest doctrines of the abstract philosophy. He possessed a talent still more useful, in which men of acute minds are sometimes deficient; and that was good sense. He could instantly and almost intuitively, discern what in human conduct was right or wrong, prudent or imprudent; not only in matters of morality and science, but in the general intercourse of the world. Of his superiority in this talent I was so sensible, that, during the last four or five years of his life, I seldom resolved on any thing that had difficulty in it, without consulting him; and I never went wrong by following his advice.

The delicacy (I may even call it the purity) of his mind was greater than I have known in any other man, at least in any other young man; and, in one so young, was truly admirable, and worthy of imitation. He was aware of the danger of admitting indelicate or improper thoughts into his mind; for he knew that associations of ideas, disapproved both by reason as incongru-

ous, and by conscience as immoral, might in a moment be formed, in consequence of inattention, even when there was no settled propensity to evil. To give an example or two of this delicacy, that my meaning may be understood, (one cannot be very explicit on this subject); such a book as that most contemptible one called *Scotch Presbyterian eloquence displayed* he would not have looked into on any account whatever; because he had heard, that passages of Scripture are introduced in it, for the purpose of raising laughter. Silly tales and jokes of the same nature he would sometimes hear in company (they are too often heard from those of whom better things might be expected); but he always showed displeasure at hearing, and never repeated them. And, notwithstanding his love of the talent called *Humour*, he would never read *The Tale of a Tub:* because he had heard me say, that there are in it gross indecencies; and that, by forming ludicrous associations of the meanest ideas with the most awful truths of religion, it could hardly fail in some degree to disorder and debase the mind. I did not tell him this, or any thing else, in a dictatorial manner; nor did I ever forbid him to read that book. But his attention was continually awake, to learn, although from the slightest hint or most trivial circum-

stance, what might be useful in purifying his mind, regulating his conduct, or improving his understanding.

Thus formed, thus enlightened, and thus inured to consideration, a mind possessed of sensibility can never be deficient in taste or critical sagacity. In this respect he was highly accomplished; of which however it is no proof to say, that at the age of eighteen he was a better judge of composition than I had been at thirty. It may be thought, that I would not neglect to explain to him the principles of good writing, as far as I knew them; and this part of my duty I did not neglect: but my diligence in it bore no proportion to his proficiency; which I impute to his natural rectitude of mind, aided by constantly reading the best authors, and abstaining, as he scrupulously did, from such as fall below, or do not rise above, mediocrity. They, who may be pleased to say, that at this rate he must have kept at a distance from what I have attempted in writing, are at liberty to think so. To me, and to every thing connected with me, he was partial; as I have acknowledged already: and they who understand human nature will not think the worse of him, either as a man, or as a critick, for having had this infirmity. A dislike of *ambitious ornaments*, and, what I might

almost call, an *abhorrence* of ostentation, appeared in him very early in life; and were heightened and confirmed by studying those ancient writers, particularly Homer, Xenophon, Herodotus, Cesar, and others, who are distinguished by a severe and majestick simplicity of style.

When he began to learn the French language, of which, under an experienced teacher, he acquired very exactly the elements and pronunciation, I, remembering with what delight I had in my youth read *Telemaque*, recommended that work to his perusal, and told him he would be highly entertained with it. In this, however, I was mistaken. After going through one half, he begged I would not insist on his reading the other, at least at present. "I acknowledge, "said he, the author's merit as a politician and "moralist, and I believe he writes the French "tongue in its purity; but I have been study- "ing Homer's Odyssey, the simplicity of which "delights me; and with this impression on my "mind I cannot just now relish the flowery de- "scriptions of Fenelon." He mentioned other objections, which I need not repeat. I said, he might lay Telemaque aside, till he found himself disposed to resume it, and in the mean time return to his Homer; for whose simplicity and grandeur I was much pleased to find that he

had a true taste. He was about fifteen when this little conference passed: It may give modish readers a mean opinion of his judgment: on those who have conversed, as he had, with ancient authors, it may perhaps have a contrary effect.

Time was not allowed him for going deep into the literature of France: his favourite authors of that nation were Moliere and Boileau. Of Rousseau he knew little; and such was his opinion of Voltaire's principles and character, that he had no curiosity to inquire after his books. Of the French tongue he seemed to think, that its want of harmony, and being almost entirely made up of idiomatick phrases, rendered it unfit for the higher poetry, and for elevated composition in general; but he did not think himself sufficiently skilled in it to pretend to judge of its merit. Italian, which he would probably have found more to his mind, he meant to study, but did not live to do it.

He was a master in Greek and Latin: and in getting those languages was much aided by his skill in grammatical art; without which it is indeed impossible (though projectors have thought otherwise) to learn them with accuracy; and, if they are not accurately learned, the acquisition is not of great value. I find, by his papers, that

he had exercised himself a little in Greek composition; which I believe is not often done in Scotland. Latin he spoke correctly and readily. In that language he and I sometimes conversed when we were by ourselves; and he soon became my superiour in this as in every other talent. Most of the things I have published of late years were submitted in manuscript to his revisal, and received from him valuable emendations. What he proposed in this way I never saw reason to reject.

In a pocket-book of his, I find hints and memorandums, some in Latin, some in English, which do honour to his character:—pious purposes,—resolutions respecting his behaviour in society;—and titles, and plans, of intended dissertations on various subjects. Among these is "A discourse on the Lord's prayer, considered "as an evidence of the truth of Christianity." It could not, he said, be contrived either by an impostor, or by the disciples of an impostor. I have heard him talk on the subject, and was so well pleased with his reasoning, that though, in consideration of his health, I wished him to write little and seldom, I even advised him to prosecute that argument; which, however, his last illness prevented.

Another thing which the pocket-book informs

me he had resolved to *think of*, was "An essay "on the writings and genius of Aristotle." Of this great ancient he was a warm but a rational admirer. He had studied his best works, particularly his Ethicks, Poeticks and Politicks: and, while he regretted his entangling himself so much in the trammels of a technical and unprofitable logick, owned that he found in him remarks and suggestions so uncommon and so judicious, as to merit the attention of every philosopher and scholar.

Of some others of his projected dissertations I shall just mention the titles, as I find them in the pocket-book: which will show at least, that he had an active mind, and was anxious to do good. The words marked with inverted commas are his own words.

"Essays on various parts of the evidence of "Christianity."

"A history of infidelity; with an examination "of the lives and characters of infidel writers, "and extracts from their works."

"Essay on the unreasonableness of infidelity: "considering, 1. the doctrine which an infidel "rejects and disobeys; 2. the arguments he re-"sists, and his reasons for resisting them; 3. "the hopes which he abandons, and what he "receives in their stead:—with an exhortation

" to the study and open profession, obedience,
" and defence of Christianity."

" Think of an account of the most celebrated
" English poets, either in a set of imitations of
" their style, or otherwise."

" Essay on ancient prodigies and miracles."

" Nature of the Jewish Theocracy—its rea-
" sons—effects—continuance."

" Remarks on the causes and cure of a disor-
" dered imagination. Advice to persons troubled
" with melancholy."

" On the pernicious effects of novel-reading,
" even where the novel is not profligate."

" Think of a Latin *dialogue of the dead* between
" Cicero and Livy, on the character and actions
" of Julius Cesar." Of this I find a fragment, in which the different styles of the two authors are wonderfully well imitated; but the fragment is short, not quite two quarto pages.

Yarico's complaint on being abandoned by Inkle. Four pages of this poem (which is in the epistolary form) have been found; but both the beginning and end are lost; and the handwriting shows the manuscript to be a first draught and uncorrected. The fragment, however, contains some animated strictures on the policy that has for its foundation the *slavery of the negros;* a subject which filled him with the utmost indignation and horrour.

" Essay on the nature, criterion, and number " of philosophical first principles. Resolution of " mathematical axioms into identical proposi- " tions."

" Thoughts on the irrationality occasioned by " sleep and delirium; with an attempt to account " for it."

" Essay on *receiving the kingdom of heaven as* " *a little child.* Dispositions requisite to the re- " ception of the gospel. Why we must not ex- " pect its evidence to appear in its full force at " first."

" Essay to prove, that the weak judgment of " some primitive christians neither could be the " effect of their religion, nor could render them " partial or incompetent judges of its evidence." He had read the writings of some of the primitive fathers.

" Essay on persons who walk in their sleep." He had formed a curious and plausible theory on this subject: but I cannot implicitly trust my memory in a case of this kind; and I do not find materials sufficient to enable me to give his sentiments on his own authority.

" Essay on the use of the Latin subjunctive " mood." I find a very copious collection of examples on which he meant to establish a theory: of the theory itself there are no traces in his

papers. Several years ago I have heard him talk very ingeniously on this point; but cannot now pretend to do justice to his opinion. I only remember that I thought his general principle more simple, and more comprehensive, than that of any other grammarian I had heard of.

" Essay on the reason why philosophy is said " rather to show our ignorance, than to aug- " ment our knowledge. This accusation is occa- " sioned by not attending to the nature of philo- " sophy; and by supposing, that it should open " the secret causes of things, when it can only " compare and generalize facts."

" Essay on disputatiousness in conversation; " conducted by misunderstanding or misapply- " ing the arguments of one's antagonist; by per- " verse analogies; by converting particular af- " firmations into general principles; by attack- " ing a general principle from a particular ex- " ception. Danger of maintaining false princi- " ples, though apparently trifling; from the con- " sequences they may imply; from the mode of " reasoning they may authorize; from the obsti- " nate habit of disputation, vanity, and bad tem- " per, which they promote. Extensive know- " ledge of the subject in hand, of logick, and of " philosophy in general, often necessary to qua- " lify one for deciding a question which all pre-

"tend to dispute about." Among his Latin memorandums,* I find a resolution against giving way to a disputatious humour in conversation. I know no person, to whom it was less necessary to form such a resolution. Dispute he hated and carefully avoided. He knew how it tends to contract and pervert the understanding, deprave

* Of these I subjoin a specimen.

Ecclesia bis Die Dominico adeunda semper, nisi valetudinis manifesto periculo prohibente.

Cogitationes quæ malam perturbationem quamlibet, seu periculosam, possint promovere, fovendæ nunquam. Innumeras formas pulchritudinum, et spem honestam ulteriora scientiæ reperiendi, natura proposuit, quæ animum leni cum delectatione vel mulceant vel excitent. A perturbationibus melancholicis melius erit plerumque mentem diducere, quam divellere. Divulsio ipsa confirmat sæpe imaginem quam velles abolere.

In colloquiis sententia (cum res postulat) proponenda modeste et breviter: fugienda omnis acerbitas et pertinacia disputandi. Rei dignitas vi sustineatur et gravitate verborum, non garrulis cavillationibus. Quid enim? Coram prudentibus agitur? Horum judicium de te sententiæ tuæ veritas conciliavit; cavillationibus non firmandum, immo minuendum. Coram stultis agitur? Non tantum tibi decoris horum assensio pariet, quantum dedecoris cavillationes istæ, quibus assensionem abtinueris.

Præteritæ levitatis animi, puerilium cavillationum, et consiliorum bonorum quæ sequi constituissem, nec sum postea secutus, et crudelitatis in animalia innoxia, sum-

the taste, sour the temper, extinguish the love of truth and of delicacy, waste precious time, and render the heart insensible to the pleasures of rational converse.

In the memorandum book are many other hints of inquiry, on various topicks of history, mathematicks, botany, chemistry, magnetism, musick, electricity, medicine, &c.: with remarks on passages of Scripture, and of Cicero, Livy, Aristotle, Quintilian, and other authors. Of these I may perhaps be better qualified, than at present, to give an account, when I shall have found leisure to arrange his prose writings.

From the Greek drama he expected much entertainment, but was disappointed. In Sophocles he found beautiful passages, a pleasing simplicity, and moral sentences well expressed; but little incident, not much contrivance, and no very nice discrimination of character. He agreed

ma cum pœnitentia reminiscar; vitaturus omnia posterum quorum præteritorum angat memoria.

Vitanda in colloquiis omnia, quæ malam animi levitatem indicent vel promoveant: servanda sanctissime veritas de omni re atque persona; nunquam, ne minimum quidem deserenda, ut ludicrum aliquid, aut salse acerbum, inducatur. Sermonis hæc condimenta sunto, Veritas, Charitas, Modestia.

In precibus intentio animi minime remittenda, &c.

with me in opinion, that ancient tragedy must have derived its charm rather from the magnificence of the scene, than from the genius of the poet; or, at least, that there must have been, in the exhibition, some attractive circumstances, whereof we know little or nothing, and are therefore not qualified to judge. He thought, that in any one of Shakspeare's best plays, in Othello, for example, or Lear, there were more strength and variety of invention, and more knowledge of human nature, than in any dramatick author of antiquity. Of our wonderful dramatist he was a great admirer: the favourite plays were, I think, Lear, Othello, Macbeth, Henry IV, and the Merry Wives of Windsor.

By some people, more prompt to speak and prone to censure, than acute to observe, his character was mistaken. They imputed his modesty to timorousness; and thought, or said at least, that I kept him secluded from society, obliged him to apply too much to books, and gave him no opportunities of knowing the world. In justice both to him and to myself, I must enter into some particulars on this subject.

When at home, indeed, he was not frequently seen in the street; a laudable regard to health, and a passionate love of rural scenery, leading him to daily excursions in the fields: it is also true,

that of teatables he was no regular frequenter; and that at cardtables and in ballrooms, (things of no small importance in a country town) he never appeared at all. By the intelligent reader, after what he has heard of him, it will not be supposed, that this was the effect of restraint on my part: on the contrary, it would have been unreasonable and cruel restraint, if in these things I had not readily complied, as I constantly did, with his inclination.

But I doubt, whether any other young man in North Britain, of his years and station, had better opportunities than he, of seeing what is called the world; and a more accurate or more sagacious observer of it, I have not known. He never was in a foreign country; but in England and Scotland his acquaintance was nearly as extensive as mine; and to many persons, in both countries, of great distinction in rank and literature, he had the honour to be known, and to be indebted for particular civilities. To give a list of names might be thought to savour of vanity rather than gratitude; yet it is not improbable that gratitude may one day induce me to give such a list. Of the principles on which I conducted his education, and of his own opinion of those principles, I leave the candid reader to judge from the preceding narrative.

In infancy, his health was very delicate, and he was somewhat timorous; not more so, however, than well-natured children, who fear to offend, commonly are. But his piety and good sense, the manly exercises in which he delighted, and his being so early accustomed to the use of arms, got the better of that timidity; so that, before he grew up to manhood, he was as fearless as a man ought to be. I know not any one, in whose fortitude I could have confided more, on any perilous emergency. Several times I have seen him in danger; once particularly in Yarmouth roads, when every person on board our vessel, every person at least who was on the upper deck, imagined it was on the point of foundering. I took him by the hand, made him swallow a glass of wine; and, on looking at him, saw his countenance perfectly undismayed, and I believe more composed than any other in the ship. He was then in his sixteenth year.

It was also supposed by some, as he was often seen walking alone, or with me, and seldom or never with more than one companion, that he must be of an unsocial disposition. The reverse was his character; he was social, cheerful, and affectionate, and by those friends who thoroughly knew him beloved even to enthusiasm. In his choice of friends, indeed, he was not hasty. For in discerning characters he was, as already ob-

served, singularly perspicacious; and the slightest appearance of immorality, vanity, pedantry, coarse manners, or blamable levity, disgusted him; though he showed his disgust by silence only, or withdrawing from the company.

He had a passion for visiting places that had been remarkable as the abodes of eminent men, or that retained any memorials of them; and, as in this I resembled him, we often walked together on what he called classick ground. Westminster Abbey, in the neighbourhood of which we lived several months, was a favourite haunt of his, and suggested many images and meditations. He had wandered in the bowers of Twickenham, and amidst the more majestic scenes of Blenheim and Windsor. At Oxford, where we passed some time, he met with many interesting objects and attentive friends. He kissed (literally he did so) the grave stone which covers the dust of Shakspeare at Stratford; and sat in the same chimney corner, and in the same chair, in which tradition tells that the immortal bard was wont to sit. He once or twice visited the village, the house, and even the chamber (near Coltsworth in Lincolnshire) in which Sir Isaac Newton is said to have been born. The last time he and I were in Cambridge, I gratified him with a sight of those apartments in Pembroke Hall, which were once

honoured with the residence of my memorable and long lamented friend Mr. Gray; of whom he was a warm admirer, thinking him the greatest poetical genius that Britain had produced since Milton. He composed an ode inscribed " To the genius of Gray," of which I find among his papers a few stanzas; but far the greater part is irrecoverably lost. This ode I think he wrote, or planned, while we were passing some time in 1787 at Windsor; where, from the terrace, he had a view of Stoke church, in which Gray is buried, and towards which I often found him directing his eyes.

When his curiosity was raised with respect to any work of art, he always wished to make himself master of at least the theory of it. In his early days he was skilled in various sorts of legerdemain; but left it off entirely, as trifling in itself, and ostentatious in the performance. One evening of his thirteenth year, he and I arrived in Newark on Trent, just as an exhibition of fireworks was beginning in the market place. It was indeed a magnificent spectacle, and the first of the kind he had seen. He immediately resolved to study fireworks; and, finding in London a systematick book on the subject, applied to it so successfully, that, for several years after, he would now and then ex-

hibit in that way, for the amusement of his friends.

Among his Latin memorandums, there is a resolution "never to engage in games of chance." Cards he detested; as destructive of time at least, if not of money: which in him I thought the more remarkable, as he had, when a boy, learned (I know not how) to play at what is called *quadrille*, and some other games. In those days he often urged me to play at cards, saying, he was sure it would amuse me. I told him, I had several times attempted quadrille; but that, of the directions given me, some I could never understand, and some I could never remember. He begged leave to write a few directions: and I gave him leave; being curious to know, how a lad of eleven years of age would acquit himself in respect of style, and the arrangement of his matter. He brought me two treatises, (still extant) one of quadrille, the other of back gammon, written with a propriety, perspicuity, and correctness, that very agreeably surprised me. I could not help telling him, as was true, that I understood them much better than any oral information I had ever received on those subjects.

There is another fashionable recreation, to which he could not reconcile his mind, the read-

ing of romances. The time employed in that way he held to be lost. Don Quixote, however, Robinson Crusoe, and Cecilia, he read with pleasure, and began, but could not get through Gil Blas. Hearing that an acquaintance of his had almost had his brain turned with *The Adventures of Roderick Random*, he had the curiosity to ask for that book, but quickly laid it aside, and would never afterwards resume it. To amuse some hours of languor, in the commencement of his last illness, I advised him to look into Fielding; and he read Tom Jones, and, I think, Amelia. He gave that author no little praise for his humour, for the very skilful management of his fable, the variety and contrast of his characters, and, with a few exceptions, for the beautiful simplicity of his style: but still —the time spent in reading it was lost; and there was more danger from the indelicacy of particular passages, than hope of its doing good by the satire, the moral sentiments, or the distributive justice dispensed in winding up the catastrophe.

I wish I could have given specimens of his talent in writing letters: but it happens, that most of those I have of his contain circumstances of private business, which ought not to be made publick. His epistolary style was cor-

rect, easy, and simple, and, like his conversation, seasoned with that unaffected and playful humour in which he so greatly excelled.

I am loath to part with my subject.

——— Juvat usque morari
Et conferre gradum ——— VIRG. VI. 487.

But some may think, enough has been said; though there are a few, who know that the subject is by no means exhausted.

About the disposal of his papers he gave no directions: being, I suppose, prevented, either by his thinking them unworthy of notice, or by his unwillingness to pain me by speaking of his dissolution. Nothing else could have prevented him: for he and I always lived on terms of the most unreserved and familiar intimacy.

One day, after all hope of recovery was gone, he called for a particular parcel of his papers, and, putting them in the hand of a friend who was sitting by him, desired that they might be burned. His friend dissuaded it; but he repeated the request, and said they contained nothing of any value. There is reason to think, that he did not then distinctly remember what papers were in that parcel (which he had made up before he had any apprehension of danger, and had not seen for many months); and that on this

occasion some things might have been destroyed, which perhaps he wished to be preserved. I cannot otherwise account for the mutilated state in which I find some of his best pieces.

I have lost the pleasantest, and, for the last four or five years of his short life, one of the most instructive, companions, that ever man was delighted with. But—THE LORD GAVE; THE LORD HATH TAKEN AWAY: BLESSED BE THE NAME OF THE LORD.—I adore the Author of all good, who gave him grace to lead such a life, and die such a death, as makes it impossible for a Christian to doubt of his having entered upon the inheritance of a happy immortality.

18th January, 1791.

ESSAYS

AND

FRAGMENTS,

IN

PROSE AND VERSE.

ADVERTISEMENT.

Of these Essays and Fragments, both prose and verse, the reader will be pleased to remember, that very few were revised by the author; that not one received his last emendations; and that far the greater part were composed in his seventeenth or eighteenth year, and some at a still earlier period. All the notes marked J. H. B. are by the author; the other notes by the editor.

ESSAYS AND FRAGMENTS.

FRAGMENTS OF A POEM ON THE EXCELLENCE OF CHRISTIANITY.*

O THOU, whate'er thy nature, cause, or name,
Pure emanation of celestial flame!
From Shakspeare's magick page whose glories roll,
To melt, alarm, o'erwhelm, the enraptur'd soul;
Illumine Pope's keen verse, and moral lay;
Beam in full radiance on the lyre of Gray;

* Virtue does not consist in the repression of hope and desire, or in surly abstinence from pleasure and insensibility to pain: it does, on the contrary, afford the only suitable gratification to desire, and confidence to hope; and produces the only pure and lasting enjoyment.—These happy ends will be attained, if our hopes and desires are fixed upon the improvement of the soul, and extended to the interests of eternity.

The christian religion alone affords the means of this happiness: for it alone teaches how we may improve the best faculties of the soul; and it can alone compose and gratify our hopes and desires, by assuring us of future felicity, and by removing that uncertainty and fear which the thought of eternal duration must raise in every mind unsupported by

And, with th' omnipotence of lightning driven,
Make Milton blaze in all the pomp of heaven!
If still, bright offspring of ethereal birth,
Thou lingering deign to cheer the gloom of earth,
Inspire thy feeble votary's design,
Exalt the thought, invigorate the line,
And bid in harmony the numbers flow,
To check gay Pride and comfort anxious Wo;
From Folly's lure the wanderer to entice,
Who heedless roams the wildering maze of vice;
And guide his footstep to that silent cell,
Where Love, Tranquillity, and Virtue dwell;
Whence Contemplation, listening, hears afar
Ambition, Interest, Pleasure, Passion jar;

the comforts of the gospel, and sensible of its own guilt and infirmity.

Though no future life were to be expected, happiness, even upon earth, could not be obtained, except from the mind. So that even a desire of present happiness should make us obey the precepts of christianity; as directly tending to improve and harmonize the soul, and to procure for us in this life all the felicity whereof in this life our nature is capable.

These particulars I would attempt to explain, partly by argument, and partly by examples. I do not wish to follow that strict arrangement, which might be necessary in a philosophical discourse; but rather to dispose the subject in such a manner as may be most suitable to the natural course of human thought, may relieve the mind by variety in the style, and may afford the best opportunities for poetical illustration.

And sees in doubt, in fear, in danger, hurl'd
The dim confusions of a distant world.

Vain crowd, whom Fashion's meteor forms decoy,
And plunge in sorrow while ye grope for joy;
Who tear from present thought the troubled mind,
Scared by the past, and to the future blind,
Still in one round of dull amusement stray,
And trifle all your empty lives away!
Say, if for once to think ye greatly dare,
What prospects feed your hope, and rouse your care:
What goads you on to hurry, at the call
Of courtly Pride; gasp in the stifling ball;
On couch of down to languish for repose,
Or rush into the field where tumult glows;
Or eye, with grinning scorn, expensive state,
Through the snug opening of an iron grate,
And peace, health, freedom, happiness resign,
To watch a dirty bag of useless coin?

King, peasant, statesman, soldier, rich and poor,
The old, the young, the courtier and the boor,
All, of whatever garb, whatever name,
Or power, or pleasure seek, or wealth, or fame.

And rightly seek; for so, by heaven inclined,
These rule, and ought to rule, the human mind,
Hopes, that rouse virtue, or from sloth protect,
The muse would not extinguish, but direct.

Man's final mansion is not here below;
His glory springs from goodness, not from show.
Wish ye for power, wealth, pleasure, fame? 'Tis well
That in your breast the seeds of virtue dwell.
But not on earth can fruit from these be given;
These seeds must ripen in the climes of heaven.
He, who bids nature flourish or decay,
In mercy gives, in mercy takes away,
And by the structure shows of human frame
Man's native excellency, end, and aim.
Man cannot soar on eagle wing, or dare
The shaggy grasp of the relentless bear;
But man the eagle's towering flight restrains,
And binds the rough bear's stubborn strength in chains;
And views and measures with adventurous eye
New orbs that glitter in th' unbounded sky.
Though tempest bellowing the swoln surge deform,
Man rides the swoln surge, and defies the storm;
Sees freedom, science, commerce, arts increase,
And bids a jarring world unite in peace.
Is then the being, who such rule attains,
Nought, but a bunch of fibres, bones, and veins?
Is all that acts, contrives, obeys, commands,
Nought but the fingers of two feeble hands;
Hands that, a few uncertain summers o'er,
Moulder in kindred dust and move no more?

No. Powers sublimer far that frame inspire,
And warm with energy of nobler fire,
And teach mankind to pant for loftier joys,
Where death invades not, nor disease annoys;
But transports pure, immortal, unconfined,
Fill all the vast capacity of mind.

Would you then wallow in the sensual sty,
With those who live to eat, and drink, and die;
Through life's short hour with blind incaution run,
Snatch present good, and present evil shun?
Would you be such as these? Then haste, away,
And revel all the night and all the day;
The future time o'erlook, forget the past;
Forget that such amusement cannot last;
Forget that, thus engross'd by splendid sin,
You blot the image of your God within;
Live hated, scorn'd, in sickness, and in fear,
To die without a friend, without a tear.
For this, were reason, power, invention, given
To man, the heir of glory, and of heaven!—
His hope and joy in conscious virtue dwell,
Acting, and knowing he has acted, well;
Not sure, to drink, to slumber, and to feed,
Wherein brutes equal him, and far exceed.
Dare to assert your rights, celestial race!
Honour awaits you, do not court disgrace;

Resemble, what will raise you, not deprave,
Your sovereign GOD, and not the beast your slave.
Would you be happy?—Strengthen, and control,
And regulate, that spring of bliss, the soul.

" All the dread splendour of high heaven, and all*
" The varied wonders that adorn this ball,
" Show, in each atom, virtues that transcend
" Whate'er man's wit can speak or comprehend.
" Then surely He, who nature's monarch reigns,
" Who forms, who fills, enlivens, and sustains,
" Whose boundless works, thus darkly understood,
" Such love display, is wise as well as good.
" Yet Vice in pleasure riots oft and fame,
" While meek neglected Virtue sinks in shame.
" Is not, to punish that, and this to save,
A doom, a recompense beyond the grave?
' Yes: in that retribution we would trust,
" Convinced, though man is weak, that God is just.
" Shall we then wish it? When this scene is o'er,
" When vice allures, and passions fire no more,
" Shall we, so long in heedless errour gay,
" So rich in blessings we can ne'er repay,

* The lines are marked with inverted commas, as expressing the thoughts, with respect to a future retribution, which might naturally arise in a rational mind unassisted by revelation; and as connected with "So spake, with anxious dread, "the wise of old," &c. J. H. B.

" Alike deprived of flight and of defence,
" Rise, and to judge us dare Omnipotence?
" In God we live and move; to him is known
" Our guilt; conceal we cannot, nor atone.
" Our being sins endanger, joys endear,
" We fear to keep it, and to lose it fear."
Deep in the clouds of general doubt enroll'd,
So spake, with anxious dread, the wise of old;
Who, in rude reason's narrow sphere confined,
Just oped their eyes, and knew that they were blind.
Meanwhile, amid the twilight of the times,
Unconscious Errour stalk'd, and licensed Crimes.
From earth's deep bosom dug the dirty ore
They melt, they mould, they hammer, they adore.
Curls in high flame a consecrated pyre,
And human victims glut th' accursed fire.
The groping seer, by holy madness driven,
From quivering entrails rakes the will of heaven.
The owl's long loud moan, screaming from afar,
Gladdens with peace, or animates to war;
While chiefs uncage, in superstitious awe,
A fluttering chick, whose appetite is law.
Dark horrour shades man's torpid race: they see
Nor God, nor virtue, nor futurity;
Save when, by forms in turbid fancy bred,
Pale Ignorance is wakened into dread;

And shapes of present crime, and future doom,
Glare momentary through th' involving gloom.
But lo, what genial tides of heavenly beam,
Pour'd slowly, midst the rolling darkness stream!
Lo, where the radiant cross, displayed on high,
Inflames the languor of yon eastern sky:
Through air, earth, ocean, spreads th' expanding ray,
And wraps the nations in a blaze of day.
Hark! a voice—" Hear, my favour'd people, hear,
" Repent; for heaven's eternal reign is near.
" Come ye whom long laborious care employs,
" Whom doubts alarm, whom servitude annoys,
" Come, bear my burden, to my yoke agree,
" Ye weak, ye heavy laden, come to me,
" My yoke is easy and my burden light;
" Hope cheers my servant, endless joys requite.
" Comfort I bring, and mercy unconfined,
" And peace on earth, and goodwill to mankind.
" My law no more in thunder I proclaim,
" Throned in thick darkness, and tempestuous flame:
" Rich offerings no longer I require,
" Or glittering altars crown'd with costly fire:
" I ask, and what I ask my words impart,
" Repentance, faith, and purity of heart.
" Come then, my people, listen and believe:
" Seek, ye will find me; ask, ye shall receive:

" Come, for the joys of heaven on earth I send,
" Come to your Lord, your Saviour, and your Friend."
Son of Omnipotence! Creation's heir!
Lord, what is man, that he employs thy care!
Dost thou for him this little planet tread,
For him in human weakness veil thy head,
And deign for him to quit th' empyreal sky,
For him to weep, to suffer, and to die!
Trembling in gratitude, before the throne
Prostrate, we claim thy merit as our own.
With humble hearts, but warm in holy trust,
Low bending let us kiss our kindred dust;
Smile in calm hope, with fearful joy adore,
Renounce all former guilt, and sin no more:
At least be grateful where we cannot pay,
Nor make his gifts the means to disobey.
Him, life and breath who gives us, shall the while,
That life dishonour, and that breath revile!
Ah! can faint words in feeble song express'd,
Disclose the burning raptures of the breast,
When sooth'd repentance melts into delight,
And all heaven opens on the vanquish'd sight;
And the soul free from fear, from sorrow free,
Sinks overpower'd in speechless ecstacy!
We sons of dust, admitted to descry
Th' eternal counsels of th' unfolding sky,

To cast around th' expansive view sublime
Wide over, and beyond, the bounds of time;
We mark Heaven's reign begun, explore its laws,
Trace their dependence, and perceive their cause,
See them from mercy rise, to blessing tend,
And, by Omniscience sway'd, in full perfection end.
Come now, proud Sage, thine ancient art compare;
Where is the wisdom now, the virtue where,
The knowledge where, by boasted reason given,
Of earth, and of th' economy of heaven?
Like stars, o'ertaken by the morning ray,
They hide their lessen'd heads, and melt away.
But how to thee could Heaven's high will be known,
Who saw'st this coil of life, and this alone?
This life, where oft, to rouse or to employ
Man's virtue, discords rage and cares annoy,
And where misfortune wounds, and passions move,
Not to reward or punish, but to prove.

Think not, of yore, that virtue's secret way
Escaped th' unlettered only, and the gay;
Or that the grave, the studious, and the learn'd
By instinct knew it, or by art discerned.
No: these of nature their opinions drew
From what they fancied, not from what they knew;
And hardly, arguing still for arguing's sake,
Could end in truth, beginning in mistake.

They who, with sober sense, and honest heart,
View'd truth unmangled with the tools of art,
Than he far better knew, who could but see
Through the wild mist of whirling theory:
A medium, which, as differently applied,
Will darken, lessen, magnify, or hide,
And, still obsequious to the sage's creed,
Hide that most, from which most it disagreed.*

* * * * * *

What chance can blast our hope, what force control,
While fix'd on heaven, and center'd in the soul!
Lo, where plague rages round, and tempests roar,
The world's meek Patriot speeds from shore to shore.

* Here follows in the MS. when it was first shown to the Editor, a comparison of the doctrines of ancient philosophy with those of the Gospel: with some keen strictures on modern infidelity and scepticism. But, in this part of the poem, so much is marked for alteration without being altered, that he cannot prevail on himself to print it in the state in which it was left: especially as there is reason to think, that several pages of this part of the work are lost, to the amount probably of about three hundred lines: the exact amount cannot be known, as the pages of the manuscript were not numbered. The conclusion of the first book is subjoined, as it seems to be more correct, and strongly delineates a predominant feature in the Author's character.

Crash the hoar dungeon's echoing bars; appear
The long dark realms of sickness and of fear;
Down furrow'd cheeks, lank, wobegone, and wan,
Roll tears of blessing on the friend of man;
Hangs on the cold pale lip the lingering breath,
Blushes new vigour on the cheek of Death;
Joy murmurs through th' applauding crowd, and free
Light smiles again, and peace, and liberty.

Mortals, in heedless folly vain, bestow
The praise of virtue on the pride of show.
But there is ONE, whose steady eye regards
The good, whose certain meed the good rewards.
HE, when in thunder speaks the trump of doom,
Will not forget his Howard in the tomb.*
" Come, good and faithful servant, whose relief
" Gave comfort to Despair, and joy to Grief.
" Didst thou sooth trouble, and alleviate need,
" Didst thou the naked clothe, the hungry feed,
" Visit the sick, and set the prisoner free?
" Know, what thou didst to mine thou didst to me.
" Come then, thou blessed of my Father, come,
" And share his joy in thine eternal home."

Go now, gay fool, whom earth from heaven decoys,
On trivial gains intent, and trivial joys;

* This was written several years before Mr. Howard's death.

Who reason, honour, virtue, throw'st aside,
For unsubstantial pomp, and cringing pride;
Who fly'st to fear from hope, from ease to care,
To wo from joy, from triumph to despair.—
Go: slink a sot, a ruffian, and a coward,
Go: ape duke Villers, and despise John Howard.

But nobler transports may his mind attain,
Whose youthful ardour breathes this humble strain;
This humble strain which, undisguised by art,
Utters no thought that flows not from the heart.
O could his weak, though well-meant, effort throw
One ray of cheerfulness on human wo;
Confute one base, one generous maxim prove,
Repress one folly, or one vice remove,
Proud of promoting peace, and easing pain,
Then would he think he had not lived in vain.

Wealth, interest, fashion, power, let others crave,
The sword of conquest wield, or ride the wave;
In other hands be empire's standard borne,
The gem, the laurel, other brows adorn.
Enough for me, in unambitious lays
That I attempt to sing my Maker's praise;
And summon those, whom earth's vain tumults please,
From turbulence and care, to rest and ease:
Nor bid them quench their wishes but control,
And raise from earth to heaven, from flesh to soul.

For all who thus improve, and thus aspire,
Best cherish hope, and satisfy desire:
Since He, who must perceive, and will requite,
Whose frown is misery, whose smile delight,
Has joined with virtue good, and vice with ill,
And framed to human duty human will.

MESSIAS.*

INCIPE, nympharum Solymæ chorus, incipe carmen.
Carmen grande sonans cœlestia dicta requirunt.
Muscosi fontes, silvarumque umbra puellis
Aoniis celebrata, et vani insomnia Pindi,
Nulla placent. Mea TE canat auspice musa, sacrata
Qui labia Isaiæ tetigisti numine flammæ.
  Cœperat Ille, futura ruens in tempora, Vates:
Virgo concipiet! Virgo Natum paritura!
Radice, en, surgit Jessæa ramus, et altum
Æthera divini floris perfudit odore.
Olli cœlestis folia ambit Spiritus, Olli
Vertice consedit vis ipsa arcana Columbæ.
Desuper irriguum, Cœli, diffundite nectar,
Spargentes pluviam per grata silentia amœnam.

* Of this translation several lines in the MS. were marked for alteration, without being altered. The whole is however so animated, so harmonious, and so true to the original, that the Editor thinks it his duty not to suppress it. It was written long before the author knew that Dr. Johnson had translated the same poem into Latin verse. The originals of this and some of the following pieces it was not thought necessary to subjoin to the translations: Pope's poems being well known to every reader.

Debilem et ægrotum recreans ea planta juvabit,
Soli obtentæ umbræ, munimentumque procellis.
Crimina discedent terris; Fallacia prisca
Discedet; trutinamque redux Astræa levabit;
Tendet olivam orbi viridem Pax, almaque cœlo
Integritas niveam labetur splendida vestem.

Diffugiant celeres anni, expectataque surgat
Aurora! O divine Infans! O nascere tandem!
Floribus, en, primis properat Natura coronam;
En, et spirantis fundit thura omnia veris!
Cerne, cacumina quâ Lebanon ferat ampla! choreis
Cerne, ut persultent silvæ procul ardua montis!
En humili a Sarone oriuntur nubila odorum!
Æthera florenti suffivit vertice Carmel!
—Vox lætans, audin'! deserta per, exclamantis!
Fiat iter; Numen, Numen venit! aspice, Numen!
Numen, Numen, longa sonant juga; saxa Deique
Adventum testata alacri clangore resultant.
Delapsum cœli convexo en excipit orbis!
Surgite convalles humiles, procumbite montes!
Hunc colite, O cedri, demisso vertice; rupes
Planæ estote; agili cursu discedite fluctus!
Messias venit! Illum antiquo carmine vatum
Prædictum, audite O surdi, cæcique videte!
Ille aciem visus nebulâ purgabit opacâ,
Caliganti oculo fundens jubar: Ille sonorum
Obstructos aditus pandet, subitoque jubebit

Insuetam harmoniam patefactæ illabier auri.
Muti cantabunt: dimittens fulcra, bacillumque,
Exsiliet, caprea ut saliens, pede claudus ovanti:
Nullum lamentum, murmur nullum audiet orbis:
Ille omnem lacrymam vultu deterget ab omni.
Mortem constringent adamantina vincla; ruinæ
Vulneraque æternæ rex sentiet infernorum.
Lanigera ut caute placidus regit agmina Pastor,
Aëra ut explorat purum, camposque virentes;
Amissas ut quærit oves, moderatur euntûm
Ut gressus, curatque diu, noctuque tuetur;
Ut teneros agnos lenta inter brachia tollit,
Mulcenti pascit palma, gremioque focillat;
Sic genus omne hominum sic complectetur amanti
Pectore, promissus seclo Pater ille futuro.
Nulla inde insurget genti gens, ulla nec inde
Flammata hostili concurrent agmina vultu;
Non acies rutilo ferri splendore micabunt,
Clangorve æratarum accendet bella tubarum;*
Flexa sed in falcem segetes metet hasta recusa,
Vomerem et in nitidum curvatus desinet ensis.
Assurgent tum celsa palatia; filius inde
Explebit lætus genitoris cœpta caduci:

* Let not the similar sounds in the third and sixth feet of this verse be imputed to the want either of care or of skill. The Translator had in his mind Virgil's *Cornua velatarum obvertimus antennarum.*

Inde suum vitis patulæ teget umbra magistrum,
Severit et quæ dextra arvos metet ipsa vicissim.
Attonitus, deserta inter late arida, pastor
Lilia cernit humi, subitumque virescere gramen;
Obstupuitque, vagus loca per sitientia, jamjam
Torrentûm accipiens longe nova murmura aquarum.
Per fissos scopulos, dudum horrida lustra draconis,
Jam nutat juncus, viridisque tremiscit arundo.
Sentibus obductam vallem sabuloque, repente
Exornat procera abies, buxusque decora:
Vimina nuda ferax excepit palma, recessit
Noxiaque herba, suumque virens dat myrtus odorem.
Depascet pratum lupus et simul agna; puelli
Florea deducent gestantem vincula tigrim:
Bosque leoque petent eadem præsepia: lambet
Blanda viatori plantas innoxia serpens.
Arridens tollet manibus captantibus infans
Cristatas angues, maculataque terga colubri;
Alludetque, notans quali auro fulgeat, et quo
Verbere molliculo linguæ micet ore trisulcæ.
Surge Salem! Regina Salem, surge! Effer in altum
Turritum caput, et radiantem luce coronam!
Aulas, cerne, tuas ornet quam longa propago:
Nati, en, progeniti nondum, natæque futuræ,
Agminibus densis consurgunt undique, vitam
Poscentes studio vehementi, immensaque cœli!
En, tua barbaricæ circumstant limina gentes,

Luce tua incedunt, procumbunt per tua templa!
Ecce tuæ pronis stipantur regibus aræ,
Amplaque dona ferunt veris cumulata Sabæi!
Et tibi aromaticæ florent nemora omnia Idumes,
Semina et Ophyricis flagrant in montibus auri.
En, scintillantes valvæ patuere polorum,
Fluminaque irrumpunt tibi puræ æterna diei!—
Mane coruscabit non posthac exoriens sol,
Vespere nec cornu reparabit candida luna;
Sed radio liquefacta tuo superante peribunt.
Atria sancta jubar plenum, sine nube refulgens
Gloria, inundabit; NUMEN splendebit et IPSUM
LUCIS; tuque die æterno potiere Jehovæ.
Æquora deficient, vanescent æthera fumo,
Labentur rupes, lapsa et juga celsa liquescent:
Olli stat verbum, stat servatura potestas;
Stant tua regna, tuus CHRISTUS dominatur in ævum.

IN

OBITUM

RICARDI WEST.

JAM mihi nequicquam ridens Aurora refulget,
Et rutilans auratam extollit lampada Phœbus;
Nequicquam volucres dant mutua carmina amori,
Atque resumit ager viridantem lætus amictum.
Heu, diversa petunt aures hæ languescentes,
Heu, diversa oculi sibi conspicienda requirunt;
Lacryma sola mei mea tantum pectora solvit,
Et sub corde meo perit imperfecta voluptas.
At ridens Aurora affert nova gaudia menti
Impigræ, quantum supra mea fata beatæ!
Vectigal cunctis solitum dant jugera; amantem
Mollitura, ales profundit parvula questum:
Illi ego nequicquam doleo, qui audire dolentis
Verba nequit; miser atque magis fleo quod fleo frustra.

SONNET (BY MR. GRAY)

ON THE

DEATH OF MR. RICHARD WEST.

In vain to me the smiling mornings shine,
And reddening Phebus lifts his golden fire;
The birds in vain their amorous descant join;
Or cheerful fields resume their green attire.
These ears, alas! for other notes repine,
A different object do these eyes require;
My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine,
And in my breast th' imperfect joys expire.
Yet morning smiles the busy race to cheer,
And new-born pleasure brings to happier men;
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear;
To warm their little loves the birds complain:
I fruitless mourn to him who cannot hear,
And weep the more because I weep in vain.

DELIA.

GRAMINEUM ad tumulum, quo Delia pulchra quiescit,
Agrestes juvenes, virgineique chori,
Prima ferent prati florentis munera, et omnem
Abrepto spargent veris honore locum.

Hic querula audebunt haud unquam spectra videri,
Quæ planctu vexent hocce nemus placidum;
At pastorum aderit congressa juventus, amorem
At non celabit candida virgo suum.

Nunquam hic cernetur rugosa venefica, nunquam
Nocturni Lemures agmina sæva ferent;
Sed bellæ vallem Dryades viridem celebrabunt,
Et rore ornabunt mane tuum tumulum.

Sæpe rubecula, vespertino lumine, amice
Exiguum huc volitans afferet auxilium;
Et cano musco, et collecto munere florum,
Ornabit gremium te retinentis humi.

DIRGE IN CYMBELINE.

BY MR. COLLINS.

To fair Fidele's grassy tomb
Soft maids and village hinds shall bring
Each opening sweet of earliest bloom,
And rifle all the breathing spring.

No wailing ghosts shall dare appear,
To vex with shrieks this quiet grove;
But shepherd lads assemble here,
And melting virgins own their love.

No wither'd witch shall here be seen,
No goblins lead their nightly crew;
But female fays shall haunt the green,
And deck thy grave with early dew.

The redbreast oft, at evening hours,
Shall kindly lend his little aid,
With hoary moss and gather'd flowers
To deck the ground where thou art laid.

Quando ululantes venti, atque ingeminans furit imber,
Silvestrem et quassat sæva procella casam;
Aut cursu in medio, campi quacunque patescant,
Te repetet memori pectore mœstus amor.

Te reddet cuicunque loco sit mœsta venustas,
Debita te nunquam destituet lacryma;
Donec et ingratum fiat mihi vivere, amandam,
Et deplorandam, dum Dolor intereat.

When howling winds and beating rain
In tempest shake the sylvan cell,
Or midst the chase, on every plain,
The tender thought on thee shall dwell.

Each tender scene shall thee restore,
For thee the tear be duly shed,
Beloved till life can charm no more,
And mourn'd till Pity's self be dead.

POEMATIS, CUI TITULUS

THE MINSTREL,*

FRAGMENTUM.

ALTE in præclusis adytis, Gothecaque caverna,
Horrent cui semper nox æternæque ruinæ,
Marmoreum cippum multo Ostentatio versu,
Sculpturâque ornet multâ, multisque tropæis:
Sit mihi, quem tenui zephyrus circumvolat aurâ,
Collis, contiguus campo; de cespite molli
Sit tumulus; violæ et passim spargantur amœnæ;
Justa aliquem et rivum, vel garrula murmura fontis;
Vespereque irradiet blande sol gramina busti.
Illuc atque omnis juvenis gradiatur agrestis;
Illuc agrestis mentem lætissima virgo,
Florum vix passos sertis nexura capillos,
Atque hilaris Maiæ festum celebrare parata.
Atque ibi per totam pastoris fistula lucem
Impleat omne nemus mœsta dulcedine amoris:
Vesper et ut tacite glauco velatus amictu
Progreditur, minime festinet pulchra caterva;
Lurida non spectri facies, lemurumve vagantûm,
Nostri infestabit placidissima rura sepulchri.

* When the author began to attempt Latin verse, he translated many stanzas of this poem. These two are given as a specimen.

FROM

THE MINSTREL,

Book II. Stanz. 17, 18.

LET Vanity adorn the marble tomb,
With trophies, rhymes, and scutcheons of renown,
In the deep dungeon of some Gothick dome,
Where night and desolation ever frown:
Mine be the breezy hill that skirts the down,
Where a green grassy turf is all I crave,
With here and there a violet bestrown;
Fast by a brook, or fountain's murmuring wave;
And many an evening sun shine sweetly on my grave.

And thither let the village swain repair;
And, light of heart, the village maiden gay,
To deck with flowers her half-dishevell'd hair,
And celebrate the merry morn of May.
There let the shepherd's pipe the livelong day
Fill all the grove with love's bewitching wo;
And when mild Evening comes in mantle gray,
Let not the blooming band make haste to go;
No ghost or spell my long and last abode shall know.

CANTILENA.

AURORÆ risus, blanda et fragrantia veris,
Gratos invitant aligerum numeros;
Vocibus et dum cuncta sonant virgulta canentûm,
Omnia mollivit carmina dulcis amor.
Nosmet, Amanda, itidem, tempestive sapientes,
Utamur raptim quæ brevis hora fugit;
Totaque deliciis sit lux concessa diei,
Per betulas virides, Endremiumque nemus.

Nam venit acris hiems anni, tristisque senectus
Adveniet, vitæ quæ properantis hiems;
Hæc te purpureo vultus spoliabit honore,
Illa umbram vernis frondibus ut spoliat.
Gaudia tum cedent animo; non amplius ulla
Carminibus mulcens exhilarabit avis;
Hæque ubi marcescunt, nos languemusque—valete.
Vos, betulæ virides, Endremiumque nemus.

SEPT. 1785.

SCOTCH SONG.

THE smiling morn, and breathing spring,
Invite the tuneful birds to sing,
And, while they warble from each spray,
Love melts the universal lay:
Let us, Amanda, timely wise,
Like them improve the hour that flies,
And in soft raptures waste the day
Among the *birks** of Endermay.

For soon the winter of the year,
And age, life's winter, will appear;
At this thy living bloom must fade,
As that will strip the verdant shade.
Our taste for pleasure then is o'er,
The feather'd warblers charm no more;
And when they droop, and we decay,
Farewel, ye *birks* of Endermay.

* Birch trees.

AD

PETRIPROMONTORIUM

INVITATIO.

QUICUNQUE nostis turbida gaudia
Tuti quieti pectoris otio,
Silentio qui ruris urbem
Posthabuisse tumultuantem:

Queis sana sano in corpore mens placet;
Excelsa quorum corda vel evehit
Sublime, vel mulcet Venustum,
Huc celeres properate gressus.

Hic fundit urna divite nam Salus
Fontes, amœni et frigora balnei,
Arvosque lætâ vestit herbâ
Et gelidis agitavit auris.

—At nulla venti sibila personant
Arbusta nobis, neve per arborum
Umbrosa late regna, longum et
Dat querulum liquida unda murmur.

INVITATION TO

PETERHEAD.

YE, who for sweets that never cloy
Can quit wild pleasure's toilsome strife;
For rural peace, and silent joy,
Can quit the storms of city life;

Whom languor, or whom pain, alarms,
Who seek a mind from trouble freed,
On nature's mild or awful charms
Who gaze in rapture; hither speed.

Here Health her bath's enlivening tide,
And fountain's sparkling nectar pours;
Fields fluctuate in flowery pride,
While cool gales fan the quiet shores.

What, though for us no tainted breeze
Along the vocal thicket rove;*
No rivulet glance through whispering trees,
And murmur down a depth of grove!

* There are no woods in this neighbourhood, and very few trees.

Fatemur: at non talia poscimus;
Patente campo læta Salubritas
Gaudet, nec humenti sub umbra
Pestiferam ciet alma noctem.

Sed non fluenti florea ripa, non
Repens susurrus per cava littora,
Desunt, freti vel glauca, longe
Purpureis decorata velis.

Non luna curru argentea lucido
Per cana collis visa cacumina,
Non flamma matutina Phœbi
Per tremulum radiata pontum.

Sublime quæras; hic tumidum mare,
Hic æstuantûm verbera fluctuum
Cernes, resultantûmque in auras
Nubila cana abiisse rorum.

Hic risus, hic convivia læta sunt,
Sermo, sodales, otia, literæ,
Quæcunque tristi, vel jocoso,
Philosopho, aut placeant poetæ.

Th' expanded plain Health joys to tread,
To drink heaven's free, fresh blowing breath,
Not pent in woods and watery shade
Exhaling pestilence and death.

Nor daisied bank of silver stream,
Nor sounding beach our fates deny,
Nor floating sails, that lightly gleam
Where ocean melts in the blue sky;

Nor moon, in solemn splendour born
Slow o'er the hoar hill's shadowy steep;
Nor the gay beam that fires the morn,
Shooting along the tremulous deep.

Or seek ye greatness? See the tide
Whirl'd in tempestuous eddies rave;
See from the brown rock's foamy side
Burst high in air the thundering wave.

Here Friendship warms, here smiles engage,
Here Converse, Quiet, Learning, Leisure,
Feed mirth, sooth care, afford the sage
Instruction, and the poet pleasure.

ODE.*

POWER of these awful regions, hail!
For sure some mighty Genius roves
With step unheard, or loves to sail
Unseen, along these cliffs and groves.

O'er the wild mountain's stormy waste,
The shatter'd crag's impending breast,
And rocks by mortal feet untrod;
Deep in the murmuring night of woods,
Or mid the headlong roar of floods,
More bright we view the present God.

More bright, than if in glittering state
O'ercanopied with gold he sat,
The pride of Phidian art confess'd.—
Hail, Power sublime! thy votary shield;
O listen to my lay, and yield
A young, but weary, wanderer, rest.

* Supposed to have been written on occasion of visiting the wild and magnificent scenery of the cliffs of Kinnoull, on the banks of the Tay near Perth. The Author has in these lines not unsuccessfully imitated that noble ode of Mr. Gray, which begins thus: *O Tu, severi Religio loci*, &c.

But if, from rest and silence torn,
And these loved scenes, I roam afar,
By fate's returning surge down born,
To toss in care's tumultuous war;

Grant me, secure from toil and strife,
And all the vain alarms of life,
And all the rabble's feverish rage,
Remote in some obscure retreat,
At least to pass, in freedom sweet,
The solitude of age.

HUNTING.

BRIGHT rays of purple fire the sky,
And gild the shivering stream,
Beyond the western mist on high
While the gay woodlands gleam.

Hark! how the voice of hounds and horn
Floats in the fragrant gale;
Along the rustling thicket born,
And down the shadowy vale.

They pass; nor Fancy's modest ear
The shouting train pursues;
No screams of bloody triumph cheer
The solitary muse.

Ye, whose victorious arts beguile
The sufferer of its breath,
Who watch with fierce unthinking smile,
The languid throbs of death;

Haste, let your harmless captives bleed;
Ye too must fall as they;

Death, on a swift though noiseless steed,
Pursues you as his prey.

Nor yet prolong the victim's wo
In lingering terrour driven:
Kill, do not torture; mercy show,
And mercy hope from heaven.

CANTILENA.

October, 1785.

DURITER heu! fati nimium mandata severa
Amplexu optatæ cogunt procul esse puellæ;
Per deserta vagor terræ incomitatus et exspes:
At quanto potius mallem succumbere morti!
Hei mihi! deliciis animi cum distrahar, unquam
Collini absentis reputabit Delia nomen?
Hei mihi! tum lacrymas reputans deflebit; acerbo
Exulis angorem meditabitur illa dolore?

Fare age, non terrore animum torquebere, cum jam
Undarum accumulant montana cacumina venti,
Cum rutilo immicuit fulgur splendore vibratum,
Et fremit horridior tonitru reboante procella?
Deficiet certe tibi mens formidine, certe
Tum miseri tandem sortem plorabis amantis,
Cum memor in mentem revocaveris omnia nostra
Irrita vota, omnemque ubi non felicis amorem.

Tum tibi mens fallax juvenem depinget amatum
Attonitum, extremaque labantem in margine vitæ:

SONG. BY ——.

SET BY MR. JACKSON.

FAR from the arms of her I love,
By fate too cruel doom'd to sigh,
To desert climes forlorn I rove:
How lighter far the task, to die!
When from my soul's soft treasure torn
Will Delia think on Colin's name?
In fancy hear the exile mourn,
In fancy see his sorrows stream?

Say, will not fear a pang inspire,
When winds the mountain billows form,
When lightnings flash their forky fire,
And awful thunder swells the storm?
A dread will surely then prevail,
Thy soul a kind compassion move,
When memory tells the tender tale
Of all my woes, and hapless love.

Then will thy fancy paint the swain
Aghast, on life's extremest verge,

Horrisonis jam nunc luctantem fluctibus—et jam
Exanimum corpus, pelago mersumque profundo.
Attamen haud adeo sinas simulacra malorum
Molle tuum tanto pectus turbare pavore:
Nam capiti nostro cœlum arcet damna benignum,
Ne tibi tam placidus vultus mœrore madescat.

Now struggling in the roaring main—
Now dead, and sunk beneath the surge.
Yet let not visions thus alarm
Thy soft and feeling heart with fear;
For thee, Heaven shields my head from harm,
To save such innocence a tear.

LINES

ADAPTED TO A FAVOURITE MILITARY AIR.

HARK, hark! the drums afar,
  And the loud clarion's angry sound,
Announce th' approaching war;
  The steeds in thunder bound:
Unfurl'd the banners glare on high;
The roar of cannon rends the sky,
  And rocks the ground.
And now, all around,
Fires flash, smoke whirls, and bullets fly,
  "To kill or wound."

And what, though battle's doom
  Suppress the youthful warriour's breath!
Could Sloth avoid the tomb!
  Can Flight escape from Death!
What though, where we may sink in sleep,
O'er the green turf no marble weep,
  No scutcheon wave!
We ask not such reward:
Fair Fame and smiling Virtue guard
  The hero's grave.

ON THE DEATH OF

MR. JAMES VALENTINE.*

YE clouds that in tempestuous grandeur driven
Involve in twilight gloom the noon day heaven;
Ye torrents, down these craggy cliffs that roar;
Ye murmurs hoarse, that sweep the pebbly shore;
Ye winds that whistle, and ye waves that roll;
Well do ye suit the sadness of my soul.
Yes, ye rude rocks, the lingering sounds return,
Ye woods, wave high your hoary heads, and mourn,
And howl, ye melancholy gales, along,
Wafting the wild notes of funereal song.
Yet, why for him attune funereal lays,
Him deaf to mortal plaint, and mortal praise;
Safe, where no perils threat, no anguish stings,
But Peace for ever spreads triumphant wings!

* The Author's cousin-german and intimate friend; a person of great modesty and worth; who, after serving five or six years as a midshipman in the British navy, and signalizing his valour in many battles, lost his life in a storm in 1785, in the twenty-third year of his age. To account for one passage in the poem, it is necessary to add, that his body was thrown on the land, and there buried.

Where hosts of Seraphim hosannas raise,
And worlds to worlds resound their Maker's praise;
Where sorrow, toil, and care, in rapture drown'd
Heaven's everlasting splendour blazes round.
The virtuous man, who nobly yields his breath,
Requires not sorrow; but exults in death:
Crown'd with fair fame the patriot hero's bier
Disclaims the tribute of a tender tear.

Let tender tears embalm the gentle maid,
In the gay morn of life whose beauties fade:
Oft at her tomb the village train be seen,
To deck with wreaths of freshest flower the green.
There let the nightingale along the grove,
At the lone midnight hour lament her love;
The snow-drop there a sickly blossom shed,
The lily languishingly hang the head;
And there the lay of wo her doom deplore,
Who bloom'd, and smiled, and charm'd, and is no more.

But other musick to thy grave be born,
And trophies different far thy turf adorn.
There let the oak in majesty arise,
Its giant arms wide-waving in the skies;
Fated perhaps with Britain's flag to shine,
And future heroes bear to deeds like thine.
That mount, where thy remains in honour sleep,
Amid the murmur of th' encircling deep,

Thy friends, who still the patriot ardour share,
Shall visit, and shall love to linger there;
Heave, in ecstatick tears, affection's sigh,
And wish like thee to live, like thee to die:
Like thee, from discontent secure and strife,
To flourish through the vernal years of life;
Then ripe in glory sink into the grave,
Mourn'd by the good, and envy'd by the brave.

Full often, when at length are past away
The languid moments of the lonely day,
And night a welcome change of scene supplies,
Spreading her sparkling mantle o'er the skies,
In sleep I see the elements engage,
And hear the winds howl, and the waters rage.
—That solitary bark contends in vain,
Toss'd in th' infuriate uproar of the main,
While mountain waves in long array are driven,
And the fierce lightning fires the angry heaven.
Lo, plunging far down down the billowy steep
She reels: and lo, she sinks for ever in the deep,
Shivering I wake in tears, aghast, forlorn,
To waste in wo the melancholy morn.

Father Almighty, whose supreme control
In light and life makes worlds unnumber'd roll;
Whose providence, to man for ever kind,
By grief refines, with comfort calms the mind;

Whose chastenings, proof of thy paternal love,
Teach hope to soar to better worlds above:
O when in light these shadows melt away,
In light, the dawning of eternal day;
When the high trump of heaven, with mellow breath,
Pours thrilling thunder in the ear of death;
On me may that last morn serenely shine,
And give me back my loved, lamented VALENTINE.

And I, untouch'd with critick's blame or praise,
Hail the new year and you, in porter and in lays.
What cannot porter's mighty power dispose,
What art not teach, what secret not disclose?
Porter with hope the anxious bosom warms,
Porter impels the cowardly to arms.
Whom like bland porter does the wretch commend,
So sure a comforter, so firm a friend?
What miser tastes, but scorns the sordid ore,
Opes his old purse, and buys a bottle more?
Is there a spell, by witch or poet sung,
That tips with eloquence the coachman's tongue,
And makes him, high on alehouse bench reclined,
With Europe's interest swell his opening mind;
Makes him, with fist and mug, elate in hope,
Knock down the French king, and drink down the Pope;
And fill the coffers of the coming year,
By taxing claret, and exempting beer?
No: these high deeds, to ancient art unknown,
Porter, thy power performs, and thine alone.
Obsequious to your wish, my willing care
Shall smooth your napkin, and shall dust your chair,
And lay your knife and fork and luncheon snug,
And make each plate a mirror, and each mug.
No spy askance our homely supper views,
No prating idler full of lies and news.

Here all are friends, pleased, and intent to please,
By cheerful confidence, and careless ease;
Who let a neighbour's conduct pass unknown,
And spare his errours, as they feel their own;
Who wish you every joy to mortals given,
Content, health, peace, and, long hereafter, heaven.
Haste then; leave your attorney in the lurch,
And slink in triumph through the postern porch.

HORACE, Epist. I. 18.

IMITATED.

"Si bene te novi," &c.

YOUR liberal spirit ne'er will condescend
To coax or wheedle, though you praise, your friend:
Flattery and fair applause as different seem,
As human language and a parrot's scream.
We hate the blandishment of the beguiler:
Yet is his opposite as vile, or viler;
That rough-hewn savage, whom we sometimes see,
Who calls ill manner'd bluntness—honesty;
Yelps in your face, and snarls with dirty tooth,
And scorns, he says, to utter aught but truth.
Virtue's firm steps to neither side incline;
Her straight path lies along the middle line.
The slave, whose very soul is not his own,
Who shrinks and shudders at a great man's frown;
Fawns for his food; and sooths and apes My Lord,
Repeats his phrases, licks up each fallen word—
Like schoolboy, watchful of the teacher's glance,
Who speaks in fear, and eyes the rod askance;
Or like an actor bungling in his part
On purpose to set off another's art.

Not so gruff Honesty: the stubborn fool
Disputes it whether goats wear hair or wool.
Each trifle arms his rage: " That' s kind, forsooth!
" A pretty story, Sir, to doubt my truth!
" Even life I value not; 'tis a disease,
" Unless I bark what, and at whom, I please."
And wherefore all this waste of angry breath?
What the great points to wrangle on till death?
—Which way from Grubstreet best to Bethle'm brings;*
And whether Quarles or Donne more sweetly sings.

Them, plunged and floundering in a sea of vice,
Whom fell Newmarket sinks, or desperate dice;
Them, who, from want of foresight wanting fear,
Through airy regions wing a mad career,
In arrant pride, though hardly worth a groat,
Drink Burgundy, and wear a velvet coat;
Them, who, in want, in rags, forlorn, and old,
Gasp, shiver, hunger, thirst, and all for gold:
Them, who start back afraid, ashamed, to see
The cold, pale, squalid form of Poverty;—
All these, though wicked even above their pitch,
Their neighbour scorns and hates,—for he is rich:
At least he warns them; and, like pious mothers,
Would wish more wisdom than his own to others;
And says, " My wealth" (and what he says is true)
" Allows me follies not allow'd to you.

* Bethlehem hospital is not far from Grubstreet.

" Friend you are poor; poor folks should not be fine;
" Go, go, contend not with a purse like mine.
" You must or may have heard, how sly Sir Bruin
" Gave scarlet suits to those he meant to ruin."
And what could be his purpose? " Can't you guess?
" Why the fools grew luxurious, like their dress;
" Would run in debt, and slumber till mid-day,
" And leave all business to attend the play;
" Haunt cockpits, boxings, billiards, races, stews,
" At length, sell cardmatches, or black your shoes."
If then both opposites alike offend,
How may one get, and how secure, a friend?
Thus—Be not rude, or mean, a droll, or sad,
But take the good in each, and shun the bad.
Search not your neighbour's undisclosed design;
His secret keep though plied with threats and wine,
Nor with pedantick pride, and sneering tone,
Deride a friend's pursuit, or praise your own:
Nor, if he hunt, and kindly bid you come,
Reject the offer, to scrawl verse at home.
There lived of yore, as ancient playwrights show it,
Two brothers, one a fowler, one a poet;*
Each to his favourite art a slave; yet neither
Could be at ease unless they were together.

* Horace calls them Amphion and Zethus: Cicero speaks of them as characters in a play of Pacuvius. *Ad Herenn.* cap. 13.

What must be done? whom should our poet choose,
And whom resign? his brother, or his muse?
He loved his brother; strife he wished to shun;
So quitted muse and quill, for dog and gun.
Profit by the example; it is best
That you yield to a powerful friend's request.
Then, trembling with delight when the steed bounds,
And the light beagle snuffs the welcome grounds,
Up, up! leave your dull lyre; grasp gun, ram cartridge;
And dine delightfully on hare and partridge.
Bold Britons love the sport, whose healthy charms
Inure to labour, hardihood and arms.
You long have loved it; you, whose ready eye
Bids with sure aim the level'd lightning fly;
Whose youth, in vigilance and vigour bold,
Dared to defy the heat, the damp, the cold,
And far and wide, untired, undaunted, go
O'er the bewildering heath, and mountain whelm'd in snow.
Nor say, as once you said in serious mood,
That those were foolish freaks of youthful blood;
That, as to sports, you never now go near 'em,
And only mind *quod decens atque verum.*
We know who puts of gravity the sham on,
Who fights *the twelfth of April* at backgammon:
We see your feats (what cannot poets see!)
When your friends come, agog for news and tea;

When patriot zeal your gammon-board unlocks,
Fleets sail o'er points, and Rodney rules in box;
While you from right to left victorious pass,
Pelting, with ivory thunder, poor De Grasse.—
And feats like these offend nor bench nor throne,
G——— would applaud a game so like his own;
Great G———, whose eyes both sea and land inspect,
The guilty to chastise, the good protect;
As times demand, to risque, or to beware,
Now rapid force employ, now cautious care,
And, as adventurous Commerce prompts the oar,
Waft a world's treasure to Britannia's shore.

Next I explain (forgive that I presume)
How you must talk of others, and to whom.
Avoid the gabbling fool who gapes for news;
A vessel wide to take is wide to lose;
The pert inquirer asks, that he may prate,
And words once utter'd are recall'd too late.

Before you praise, explore with anxious view;
Another's fault may bring disgrace to you.
Oft by mistake th' unworthy we commend;
Him, who discredits you, no more defend:
But, if meek Worth repose upon your care,
In his defence no pains, no interest spare;
And him, whom Obloquy with rankling tooth
Gnaws, vindicate; nor fear t' avow the truth.
Here, did no nobler thoughts your bosom warm,
Even your own danger might your courage arm.

When Virtue Envy's venom'd shafts pursue,
Haply a random bolt may glance on you.
A neighbour's wall on fire attention claims,
And broad and broader blaze neglected flames.
When My Lord Leerwell's flattery sooths their ear,
Triumph the young and raw, th' experienced fear.
While your gay galley, with a flowing sail,
Dances before a fair but fickle gale,
Prepare, lest contrary a tempest roar,
Raise the rough surge, and dash you back on shore.
The lively hate the dull; the grave, the glad;
Th' alert, the slow; the jocular the sad;
And midnight bellowers hoot him for an ass,
Who guzzles not a bumper in each glass,
Although he say and swear, that he could never
Drink half a pint of claret without fever.
No care your brow contract, no cloud defile;
Smooth it, and light it up into a smile;
There are who think a modest man, a log;
And him who will not tattle, a shy dog:
(Perhaps example, more than words, may show it.
So look, not to the poem, but the poet.*)
Ask of the wise, and learn, how down the tide
Of life you gently may, and safely, glide:
How of each vain and irksome wish be clear;
Each hope fantastick, and unmanly fear.

* The imitator rallies his own taciturnity.

Oft ponder moral themes; and thus inquire:
Virtue—does learning form, or heaven inspire?
What to alleviate human care may tend?
Conscience how shall I make and keep my friend?
Where hope to find tranquillity serene
In the tumultuous, or the quiet scene?
Where myriads for renown and riches jar,
Or in th' unseen and silent vale afar?

Where winds the might of Dee's majestick stream,
Brightening the dusky wild with watery gleam;
While I, at leisure, on the murmuring brink,
Have sat me solitary down—to think,
Would you know what sets my fond heart on fire,
What wealth, power, honours, pleasures, I desire?—
May heaven still lend the little I possess,
Or, if too much that little, give me less;
And, should a longer life my comforts crown,
Give liberty, to make that life my own;
Of books, a large; of viands, frugal store,
But fix'd, not trembling on the dubious hour.
May He, whose will th' immense of nature sways,
Grant me, of health and of protracted days,
What he deems meet. And O, to this be join'd,
Good Heaven, that best of blessings, Peace of mind.

January 1787.

DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

I.

ADDISON, JOHNSON.

ADDISON.

I AM happy in this opportunity of expressing my thankfulness for a work, which makes every friend of learning greatly indebted to you; as it gives additional strength and perspicuity to the best language now spoken upon earth.

JOHNSON.

No, Sir; if any thanks are to be bestowed on this occasion, it is my business to bestow them. Additional strength that cannot receive, which is not already strong; and more perspicuous that cannot be rendered, which is not already clear. The student may inquire, and the dictionary may retain: but, without the previous efforts of the author, in smoothing the rugged paths of grammatical literature, vain were the researches

of the studious, and vain the industry of the lexicographer.

ADDISON.

But mankind have another cause of gratitude to you. You have endeavoured, and with success, to instruct them in morality, as well as in criticism. Your *Rambler* ——

JOHNSON.

And how do you like the *Rambler?*

ADDISON.

I am sorry to say the style of it is not such as I can highly approve: it is more exceptionable than that of your latter works, your *Lives of the Poets* in particular. Yet even these have too many of the *dulcia vitia*, which some old criticks objected to in Seneca, whom I think you resemble in more respects than one. But the matter of the *Rambler* is in general excellent; if it be not in some places rather too misanthropical.

JOHNSON.

Ay, ay, misanthropical! So of me says every one who has viewed the tumults of the human soul only from a distance; who has perceived the more violent effects of prejudice and

passion, without seeing from what causes they might have originated. You, Sir, passed your time in affluence, prosperity, and ease; supported by the applause of literature, and the patronage of greatness; you were kind to others, for others were kind to you. My genius bloomed in a desert; and from that desert it was not drawn, till the winter of life had repressed its vigour, and tarnished its beauty. My days were spent in sickness and in sorrow; agitated by fruitless hope, and chilled by unforeseen disappointment. That from this severity of external circumstances I might acquire a severity of external behaviour, why is it to be wondered? All men have their infirmities, and I had mine. Yet these consequences of adversity did not contaminate my heart; which was ever a friend to the best interest of mankind, and ever true to the cause of religion and virtue.

ADDISON.

I am not ignorant, that the manners of every man are affected by his condition, even as the fruit of a tree receives a tincture from the soil that produces it. Nor am I ignorant of your many virtues, which have secured my esteem and reverence, and will preserve to you the esteem and reverence of all good men, let petty

criticks nibble at your character as they please. I know too, that, if there was a little peevishness in your writings and conversation, it must be attributed to bad fortune, and to no badness of heart: which made me speak slightly of those passages in the *Rambler* with which I am dissatisfied.

JOHNSON.

But you threatened to object to my style: did you not?

ADDISON.

I did: I think it has too unwieldy and too uniform a dignity. In composition even excellence itself will tire, if continued without variety. And your very best performances, from too free a use of uncommon words, and from a constant endeavour at quaintness, antithesis and wit, are destitute of that simplicity, without which there can be no true elegance.

JOHNSON.

A very delicate observation indeed! and from one at whose hands I had a right to expect it! On whom have I lavished the honours of literary applause more liberally than on you? Have I not said, that "whoever wishes to attain an

" English style, familiar but not coarse, and ele-
" gant but not ostentatious, must give his days
" and his nights to the volumes of Addison."

ADDISON.

You have indeed bestowed on me greater praise than I deserve. But I can hardly think your praises of my style come from the heart, when I see you so unwilling to practise yourself what you recommend to others.

JOHNSON.

Sir, I am not accustomed to speak but from the heart; nor will I ever recommend to others what I myself would not practise. I have laboured my style with the greatest attention: I have endeavoured to make it, as I wish it to be, close without obtenebration, perspicuous without languor, and strong without impetuosity.

ADDISON.

And my greatest objection to it is, that you have laboured it too much; or, at least, that its elaborateness is too apparent. It savours more of art than of nature, more of the midnight lamp than of the pure radiance of noon; and in your readers either produces inattention to the sense, while they are occupied in considering the

words by which it is expressed; or makes them doubt the sincerity of one, who seems less concerned what he shall say than how he shall say it.

JOHNSON.

Your remarks are specious, Sir; they are specious; but they are specious only. They are the remarks of a man adapting rectitude to his own practice, not forming his practice by the rule of rectitude. And I will now declare, since you have driven me to it, that though I think your composition light and lively, and therefore recommend it as a model to ordinary writers, I cannot help observing in it a colloquial imbecillity, to the standard of which a man of energetick thought could not, without danger of enervation, subject himself. A man of genius, Sir, will display the coruscations, or rather the steady lustre, of that genius, equally by the manner and by the matter, equally in his sentiments and in his diction.

ADDISON.

To this I object not: but at the same time I beg leave to say, that genius may be as much shown in simple as in pompous writing. Artis est celera artem. And, if you would hear me with patience and impartiality, I might perhaps convince you, that it would not have been hurt-

ful to your compositions, if you had softened their oratorical rigour with a little of that *colloquial imbecillity* which you censure in mine.

JOHNSON.

Well, well; you shall be heard with patience. I must allow that you possess a facility of expression which is not unpleasant. You have a mind well furnished with the stores subservient to elegance and utility; but your thoughts are in energy deficient, because you are too little ambitious of adding ornament to elucidation. You have in you, Sir, too much of the playful and pliant companion, and too little of the dignity of an author.

ADDISON.

That I take to be a great compliment. And perhaps our present contrariety of opinion might make us mutually desire the conversation of each other; since you are as willing to object, as I am to be praised; and since I receive as commendation what you speak as censure.—However, you have allowed me to examine your notions of style, and I will not defer that topick any longer. You will doubtless agree with me, that speech was intended to convey the sentiments of men from one to another; and that,

therefore, its first and most essential quality is, to be understood.

JOHNSON.

Yes: I admit that language must be intelligible; and that it was fabricated as a vehicle for human cogitation.

ADDISON.

Since, then, we agree in this, you will also allow that of two words having the same signification an author ought to prefer the more intelligible.

JOHNSON.

I might perhaps agree with you in general upon that point. But are there not words, sullied by the mouth of the multitude, which from meanness, or vulgarity, become unsuitable to the majesty of composition?

ADDISON.

If a word, conveying an idea with meanness either inherent in itself or acquired by association, be compared with another word which conveys the same idea without meanness, the significations of those words are in some degree different, and therefore they are not included in my proposition.

JOHNSON.

Perhaps you may be right. But are there not words whose venerable magnitude gives them an elegance and a dignity superiour to that of the more dimunitive parts of Speech? Cant words, and vulgar words in general, are short. Your friend Swift will tell you so.

ADDISON.

Yes: but he will not tell me, that short words are always either cant, or vulgar.—I allow that in certain circumstances, even in prose, one word may be preferable to another for the sound only. But I can never admit, that sound is more valuable than sense; or believe, that a reader, when he meets with a word he does not understand, will think his ignorance compensated by his discovering that the word in question consists of six or seven syllables, and ends with —*ation*, or —*osity*. If it were to be established as a rule, that one expression should be preferred to another for the sound merely, without its being considered whether common readers could understand it or not; we might soon expect to see the words *answering* and *noisy* banished from our language, that their place might be supplied by the Greek *Polupholsboio* and *Apameibomenos*. I must therefore maintain, that one word is to be chosen in pre-

ference to another for the sake of the *sound*, only when the sense is in both exactly the same, and in both equally perspicuous.

JOHNSON.

And I must, I think, give my assent to your former proposition thus limited and explained. But surely you do not mean to insinuate, that an author must use no word which cannot by the vulgar be understood.

ADDISON.

By no means. I know that an author may have occasion to mention many things that the common people do not understand, and therefore have not language to express. But I still think, that he ought to prefer a word which the vulgar can understand to one which they cannot, if it convey the same meaning with equal elegance.

JOHNSON.

I see that you adhere to your rule, and will oblige me to agree with you.

ADDISON.

Do you then renounce *fragility*, *detruncation*, and other unwieldy things, whose sense may be expressed in plain English with equal elegance and much greater perspicuity?

JOHNSON.

Sir, Sir, you have a puerile mode of argumentation, which you must have learned by conversing with the *rabble* of London in your diurnal papers: my periodical lucubrations had a loftier aim. Make me a speech to confirm your doctrine, and I will confute it; write me a system, and it shall be overturned; but do not harass me with the assiduous importunity of question and inference, as if you were putting interrogatories to a school-boy. I never intended that every word to be found in my dictionary should be considered as a good word.

ADDISON.

If my arguments are just, do not reject them as childish; and remember your promise, that you would hear me with impartiality and patience.

JOHNSON.

Well: perhaps I may be inclined to allow, that my diction might have been improved in intelligibility, by the removal of such words as those you object to. But where then would have been the cadence of my periods, the pomp of my sonorous phraseology, the —

ADDISON.

You agreed with me, that in style perspicuity is the first thing to be considered; and that it is to be embellished by attention to the sound, only when that can be done without injury to the sense. But, even with regard to sound,—do you think that Virgil would have been accounted an harmonious poet, if he had continued through the whole Eneid that strain of versification, however elegant and sublime, in which he describes the storm in his first book; or that Homer would have been, in your opinion, to be commended, if he had related the meeting of Penelope and Ulyssus, or the parting of Hector and Andromache, with the same thundering impetuosity of numbers, which he employs upon the stone of Sisyphus, or the horses and chariot of Neptune?

JOHNSON.

No: I allow, that harmony of style is merely relative, and deserves praise only when it suits the subject; and that the same strain of eloquence, if too long continued, induces languor from its want of diversification, as well as displacency from the appearance of excessive art.

ADDISON.

Is it your opinion, then, that the pompous uniformity of diction, which we find in the *Rambler*, can please by its variety; or that it can be adapted to each different subject, when it is equally applied to all:—to the trifling as well as the magnificent, to praise and to censure, to argument and to narrative? Do you not think, hat the same objections may be made to the structure of your style, as to the sound; if both ought to possess, what you have given to neither, variety suited to the subject? And would not one be apt to imagine, that an author, who, by the sound and composition of his language, elevates equally sublime and familiar ideas, might run some risk of falling under the imputation of bombast?

JOHNSON.

Sir, you grow intolerable:—but when were whigs otherwise? You still forget that you are not now engaged in disquisition with one of the populace of London. Yet I would not have you imagine, that such arguments can affect or change my mind. No, Sir, if I cease to answer, it is more from lassitude than from conviction.*

* Though Johnson appears to some disadvantage in this Dialogue, it is but just to remark, that the author

ADDISON.

And yet my arguments are not, in my judgment, either tedious or inconclusive. But you promised not to be angry or partial; and I know you too well to entertain any *serious* doubt of your sincerity. A little irony now and then is a good seasoning to conversation. Tell me now, my good Sir, your real opinion; and let us then amuse ourselves with some topick more suitable to the tranquillity of Elysium.

JOHNSON.

Why, Sir, if you will have it, I may possibly allow, that you are partly in the right. If I had my style to form anew, I should perhaps make it, in a greater degree, elegant without constraint, dignified without ambitious ornament, strong without rigidity, and harmonious without elaboration.

held in high veneration the genius, virtues, and learning of that great man; with whom he had the honour to be acquainted.

II.

SOCRATES, JOHNSON, AND A FINE GENTLEMAN.

August 1787.

SOCRATES.

HOW vain, and how contradictory, are the joys and the wishes of man! How many inhabitants of the earth are now lamenting the death of Doctor Johnson; while we rejoice in it, as an event that adds so valuable a member to the society of Elysium!

JOHNSON.

Ay; what will become of that pack of yelping authors, now when old Johnson, the whipper-in, is gone from among them?

FINE GENT.

However they may delight in the remembrance of your elaborate conversation, or the elegant title of a *yelping pack* which you so politely confer upon them; at least they will allow the name of *whipper-in* to belong not improperly to one, who was much more ready to punish than

to praise; and who, fretted by the folly or the incivility of a few individuals, let fly his unmerciful lash upon the whole community of mankind.

SOCRATES.

My friend, let me advise you to be a little more cautious in forming your opinions, and more guarded in your expressions; at any rate be not so eager to deserve the reproach you are bestowing upon another:—do not, offended by a little superstition, or disgusted with a little unpoliteness, attack indiscriminately a man adorned with so many excellencies both moral and intellectual. I am somewhat apprehensive, that you might, on this occasion, be convicted of misrepresentation, as well as partiality. Have not many writers, instead of despising or resenting the chastisements of Johnson, been at pains even to collect every fragment of his lash (if I may refer to your own allusion) and to twist them, interwoven with flowers, into an ornament for the head of their master?

FINE GENT.

Into a scourge for his back, I suppose you mean, good Socrates. Johnson has been compared to Acteon, who was worried by his own

dogs: or, if you will have my allegory in the form of a garland, I must declare myself of opinion, that those blundering biographers have girt their wreath about the neck of their favourite character, instead of the brows, and so strangled what they were impatient to adorn.*

JOHNSON.

Sir, if I were still relaxed by the imbecility, or agitated with the passions, of mortal life, I might answer your folly with the severity it deserves. Had those biographers been able to injure my character, they durst not; had they dared, they were not able. My infirmities I have ever acknowledged, and with humility and regret I still acknowledge. My abilities, surely, did not make me the object of contempt, or my virtues of abhorrence; either, I hope, I did not overrate: I have endeavoured fairly to estimate, and candidly to declare, my excellencies (if any thing human may be so called) and my defects. Of both these, to him who would distinguish himself, or improve others, the knowledge is necessary: of his defects, that confidence may not swell into pride; of his excellencies, that the modesty

* This was written several years before the publication of Mr. Boswell's Life of Johnson, which the author never saw.

of distrust may not shrink into the torpor of timidity. If I was subject to the frailties of humanity, what does it prove, but that I was a man? If I recommended, by the subtlety of argument, if I supported, by the impudence of example, if I decorated with the splendour of wit, or enforced by vehemence of declamation, doctrines hostile to religion and to goodness, brand me with all the infamy that language can express or malevolence contrive: but if my ability, such as it was, I exerted in the defence of virtue and the discomfiture of vice, I apprehend no danger from the assiduity and eloquence, either of you, Sir, or of my biographers.

FINE GENT.

And yet, before I left the upper world, no fewer than three volumes had been published concerning your sentiments and behaviour; which volumes, as several people of fashion have assured me, can do little credit to your principles and candour, in the opinion of the present age or of posterity.

JOHNSON.

Yes, Sir, I have been told, I shall not say by people of fashion, but I will say by persons of veracity, that some writers have been very in-

dustrious to record Anecdotes of Johnson; and to represent as serious and solemn philosophy what I might have retorted hastily, in the moment of fretfulness, perhaps under the pressure of disease, or ironically hinted in the confidence of playful conversation. This is an age, Sir, of ignorance and loquacity; all are very willing to talk, and almost all are very unable to think; and they who have nothing to say of their own, are glad to say something that has been said by others. Thus my sayings have been inquired after with curiosity, and collected with avidity. The preference usually given of obloquy to praise may be unpleasant, but is not unaccountable: what was most agreeable to the biographer himself, and what he knew would be most agreeable to his readers, he readily observed, was careful to remember, and willingly told; and the harsh features of my character became most remarkable; not because they were the most numerous; but because, being somewhat prominent, they were by the firebrand of malicious inquiry most strongly illuminated. No man of sense needs be told, that of the little railleries, which give flavour and poignancy to familiar conversation, more must be judged from the manner in which they are delivered, than from the words: the latter my biographers have been

studious to record; the former they have been no less studious to conceal, or perhaps they had not skill to exhibit.—But, let the rabble, both small and great, affix to the words Samuel Johnson any idea they please; of such I scorn alike the applause and the disapprobation. I seek the praise of the good, the judicious, and the learned; and he who has prudence, erudition, or charity, must be willing to gather my principles rather from what I have written, than from the prattle of a gossip; who is more anxious that a story be entertaining, than that it be true; whose observation may be erroneous, and whose narrative may of course be imperfect. From the sentiments of posterity I have little apprehension. I trust my writings will be read and esteemed, when those of *some* of my biographers (I do not say *all*) shall nowhere be found.

FINE GENT.

That man must have very little confidence in his own character, who is unwilling that it should be examined and recorded.

JOHNSON.

Sir, I hope I have no reason to be diffident of my character; although I may have good reason to distrust some of those who have undertaken

to describe and analyse it: a person of integrity and innocence submits reluctantly his cause to the care of an ignorant pettifogger, and the verdict of a temerarious jury. That man will not write paltry tales, who can write any thing better; and he who can write nothing better will write nothing good. Anecdote is but a small part of the materials from which the careful historian collects a character: he who is able to rear the edifice will not employ himself in compounding the mortar. * * * * *

III.

SWIFT, A BOOKSELLER, AND MERCURY.

BOOKSELLER.

TO enjoy *in future* the company of a gentleman, whose *consequential* character *in the literary line* I have long *made up my mind upon*, is a pleasure which I *set great store by*, though obtained by the loss of my *existence*.

SWIFT.

Pray, friend, where did you learn your English?

BOOKSELLER.

I was born and bred in London, and of such *marked* regularity in my *line of conduct*, that no man could charge me with a single act of *incivism*, or any thing that *went* to the *disorganization* of the society of which I was a member. I served an apprenticeship to a *tip-top* bookseller; and have often heard the most learned authors discuss points of literature: I have seen them, Sir, for

hours *on their legs*, and *going into a variety of matter*. The deuce is in it, if I do not speak English of the very newest and best pattern.

SWIFT.

In what part of the town did your learned authors find kennels and dunghills to wade into in the way you mention? Fleet-ditch, I am told, is now decent; and has not half that variety of filthy matter, dead cats and dogs, drowned puppies, and stinking sprats,* which it formerly had. But first of all, friend, what was your last employment in the other world?

BOOKSELLER.

In place of *negativing* your questions as *inimical*, though I own that *at this first blush of the business* they appear so, I shall be happy *on the instant* to *meet your ideas*, and *narrate* what you *desiderate*, not doubting of being *well heard*.

SWIFT.

Sir, I am not deaf now, as I was in the other world: I shall hear you well enough if you speak distinctly. I ask what trade you followed.

* See Swift's description of a city-shower.

BOOKSELLER.

You mean, I suppose, in what *professional line* I was bred. I hinted already, that my employ-went was to *bring forward* to the view of the publick *at large* the *ideas* of the learned: in other words, I was in the typographical and *bookselling lines;* and am *free to say*, that in both *lines* my *line of conduct* was *indicative* of *exactitude* to a *degree*. I *netted*, Sir, although my *expenditures* were not small, so considerable a sum, that, on the *demise* of my wife, who *resigned her existence* about a year ago, I *sported sables* in my own *gig and hair*. I *had in contemplation* a seat *in the Commons;* but —

SWIFT.

So; you were a bookseller. In my time, however, the idea of a learned man could have been comprehended by the *large publick*, or the *publick at large* (how did you call it, pray?) without the help of an interpreter. But perhaps I did not take your meaning.

BOOKSELLER.

Dear Sir, what *unfounded ideas* you *bring forward!* You take me up *on a ground* entirely different from that on which I intended to *meet you*. I have formerly *set store by you;* having heard

you *held forth* as one who had secured the *marked* approbation of many. You seem inclined to *maltreat* me, but have said nothing that *militates* against me as a *professional* man, or *goes* to *substantiate* any charge *inimical* to my character. And since you are pleased to be *provocative*, I am *bold to say* that some of our best criticks *scout* and *reprobate* your yahoos with the most *marked* energy; complain that they *feel* squeamish when they think of them; and *have the idea* that descriptions of that *description* can be agreeable to readers of no *description*. I have heard one author, whose name has long been *inregistrated* in the annals of literature, affirm that they are *disgusting to civilization*. A justice of the peace of my acquaintance *committed himself* —

SWIFT.

The deuce he did! the laws as well as language of England must be greatly changed of late years. Go on, Sir, perhaps I may at last understand you.

BOOKSELLER.

I say, the justice *committed himself*, that he would prove your diction as well as imagery to be low and vulgar; that it has nothing of the *ton* in it, no long sonorous phraseologies, no ap-

pearance of your being *conversative* in ancient or foreign language; nothing, in a word, but what the common people may understand, as well as the most learned men in the kingdom.

SWIFT.

Was there ever such a fellow! Hark you, Sir, do you know whom you speak to, or what you are speaking?

BOOKSELLER.

Most *decidedly*, Sir; but *fellow me no fellows* if you please. Your writings, however great their *publicity* may once have been, *have had their day;* they are now a *boar*, Sir, a mere *boar*. I *took more money* last winter by the *Passions of Werter*, than I have *taken* by a seven years' sale of the lucubrations of Swift.

SWIFT.

Werter! what is that?

BOOKSELLER.

Have you never heard of Werter? what an illiterate out-of-the-way world is this! You have no *fashion* among you; nothing *clever sentimental*, nothing that *implicates reciprocity* of the finer feelings. Why, Sir, Werter is one of

the most *eventual** and *impressive* of all our *novel* novels: the demand there is for it *outbounds* your comprehension. You smile; but what I say is *a truism*. If you would *be agreeable* to hear, I would give you a *statement* of some particulars. Werter is a true hero, and in his *line of conduct*, as a person of the highest honour and fashion, most *correct;* though a German by birth, he must have kept the best company in France; and so extraordinary a scholar, that he actually carried a Homer, a Greek Homer, Sir, in his pocket. But misfortune *ingurgitated* him in the very lowest *ebb* of distress. His affections were *captured* by a neighbouring gentleman's lady, with whom he wished to have a *sentimental arrangement*, a little *flirtation*—(you understand me)—an *affair of gallantry*, I mean; and whose cruelty *fractured* the good young man's heart, and made him *temerariously* put a termination to his *existence*.

SWIFT (*to* MERCURY *entering*.)

You come in good time, Mercury. Our friend Horace says, you were famous in your day for eloquence; perhaps you may be able to interpret

* *Eventual* and *Eventful* are confounded in the new-fashioned jargon.

some of this learned person's gibberish. He was speaking of one Werter.

MERCURY.

I overheard all that passed, so you need not recapitulate. Those same Passions of Werter I have seen. Werter tried to corrupt his neighbour's wife, and not wholly without success; but, finding the lady not quite so forward as he wished, he left her in a rage, blew his brains out with a pistol, and (if we believe some men of rhyme who have been whimpering on the occasion) went incontinently to heaven.

SWIFT.

Is it possible that so silly a tale can be popular?

MERCURY.

It is possible, for it is true, or, as this gentleman would perhaps say, is a *truism*.

SWIFT.

I am glad I have got out of that vile world. It was in my time so bad, that I foolishly thought it could not be worse; but now it must have renounced both common honesty and common sense. But whence comes it, that I understand so little of this man's English?

MERCURY.

Would you have Englishmen of the present age speak the language of Queen Anne's reign?

SWIFT.

Certainly. Why did Addison and I and some others take so much pains to improve and fix the English tongue? should we have done that, think you, if we had imagined that, in so short a time, it would be so miserably altered and debased? But who are they who thus take it upon them to disfigure the language, and by so doing to discredit the literature, of England? Not surely the most respectable part of the community. Men of true learning and good judgment are anxious to preserve the purity of language. Those barbarous idioms I take to be the manufacture of illiterate and affected persons, who mistake grimace for elegance, and assume the appearance of learning because they know nothing of its reality.

MERCURY.

You are a pretty good guesser, my old friend. But you must know there is now, in the world you left, a most vehement rage of innovation in language, government, religion, and every thing else. That a thing is new, is now a sufficient

recommendation, however inconvenient it may be, however unnatural and unseemly: nay the more unnatural it is, the better chance it has of coming into fashion. On the British stage, with infinite applause, young and beautiful actresses perform sometimes the parts of highwaymen; and some singing actors squall in an affected voice resembling, and intended to imitate, that of women: the most humorous dramatick pieces are frittered away into songs: and I should not be surprised to hear, that henceforth Miranda and Juliet are to be personated by grim-visaged grenadiers seven feet high, and Falstaff by a slender miss just entered in her teens; that Hotspur and Henry of Monmouth are to fight to the tune of Lillibullero; and that Hamlet and Cato will sing their respective soliloquies in a dance accompanied with a Scotch bagpipe. Similar remarks I could make on other publick exhibitions. The pulp—

SWIFT.

We will, if you please, defer these to another opportunity. In the mean time I wish to hear more particulars of the degeneracy of the English tongue, and of the principles on which it seems to have been conducted. It is a subject, you know, which engaged my attention not a little, while I was on the earth.

MERCURY.

Would you have me give you the arrangement and natural history of chaos!—However, though I cannot pretend to enter so minutely into so complex a business, I shall offer a few directions, which would enable you, if you were so disposed, to make English *of the newest and best pattern* as well nearly as this learned bookseller.—My first rule is a very comprehensive one: "Avoid short words as much as possible, "however significant and well sounding, espe- "cially if they be of English or Saxon original, "and universally understood; and, in order to "raise admiration of your learning, use, in their "stead, longer words derived from the Greek, "Latin, or French." Instead of life, new, wish for, take, plunge, &c. you must say *existence*, *novel*, *desiderate*, *capture*, *ingurgitate*, &c. as—a fever put an end to his *existence*—

SWIFT.

But that would mean—annihilated him both body and soul.

MERCURY.

True; but language is not now thought the worse for being ambiguous; and ambiguity of manner is not in less request than ambiguity of

phrase: it is considered as a proof of consummate urbanity, when a writer, even a writer of history, and of ancient history too, so disguises himself, that his reader cannot find out whether he be in jest or earnest. Besides, I need not tell you, that by many genteel people death and annihilation are supposed to be the same thing.

SWIFT.

Proceed, if you please.

MERCURY.

Instead of a new fashion, you will do well to say—A *novel* fashion; for this looks like French, and this by the common people will not be understood. For the same reason, and to show your skill in the Latin tongue, say, not—I wish to be quiet, but,—I *desiderate* quietness or rather *quietude:* and you must on no account speak of taking the enemy's ships, towns, guns, or baggage; it must be *capturing*. About twenty years ago, when this word was imported, I heard a surly English ghost remark, that, since his countrymen had learned to talk of *capturing* ships, they seemed to have lost the art of taking them; but Rodney, Hood and others have since proved that he was mistaken.

SWIFT.

You mentioned *plunge* as an unfashionable verb.

MERCURY.

Ingurgitate is more genteel; because it is long, uncommon, and sonorous, and to those who have no Latin, utterly unintelligible. He was *ingurgitated in the lowest ebb of distress* is fine language.

SWIFT.

Ebb, that must mean *abatement* of distress.

MERCURY.

Formerly it might have been so; but you may now see *lowest ebb* used for *greatest depth*, and it is thought elegant, because new. I know not whether I mentioned *sort* and *kind* as unfashionable nouns; they are quite vulgar: *description* being longer, and of Latin original, is thought much better than either, whatever harshness or confusion it may occasion. Our friend the bookseller gave a good example, when he said, of your description of the yahoos, that descriptions of that *description* can be agreeable to readers of no *description*.—But of this part of the subject we have had enough. Proceed we now, as before, to rule the second, which is this: "Always

" when you can, prefer figurative to proper ex-
" pression, and be not nice in the choice of your
" figures, nor give yourself much trouble about
" their consistency."

SWIFT.

That is just the contrary of what I used to recommend. A few examples, if you please.

MERCURY.

Instead of—He spoke an hour on various topicks, you must say—*He was an hour upon his legs and went into a variety of matter:* an idiom, which is now very common, and much admired; because it is *figurative*, *verbose*, and *ambiguous:* three qualities of style, which are now, among fashionable writers and speakers, indispensable. —Instead of—He undervalues his enemies,—say, *He sets no store by his enemies*, or rather, *He sets no store by those who are inimical to him. Inimical* is a great favourite, though they who use it are not yet agreed about the pronunciation of it. It came in at the same time with the verb *capture*, and from the same quarter. Unfriendly and hostile must both give place to *inimical;* the former, because it is mere English; the latter, because, though of Latin original, it is univer- understood.—Instead of—At first view,

you must say—*At the first blush of the business. Hold out* is a figurative phrase of very general use: every imaginable conception of the human mind is now supposed to have hands and arms for holding out something.—Letters from Spain *hold out* an *inimical* appearance: This plan or idea *holds out* great advantages: Distress of mind is *held out* by physicians as the cause of his bad health.—But I see you grow impatient, and shall go on to my third rule, of which I gave a hint already. " Avoid conciseness, and use as many words as possible." When you speak of a man's conduct, you must always call it, his *line of conduct:* and instead of an authentick narrative,—you must say, a narrative *marked with authenticity*. Indeed, the words *line*, *meet*, *marked*, *feel*, *go*, and some others, may be used on all occasions, whether they have meaning or not: as—He was received with *marked* applause, *marked* contempt, *marked* admiration; *meet* your wishes, *meet* your arguments, *meet* your support, *meet* your ideas, *meet* your feelings, *meet* you on any ground, &c. Then as to *line*—every thing is now a *line*. You must not say, He is in the army, but, He is in the *military line*, or in the *army line;* nor, He is bred to business, but, He is bred *in a professional line*. So, instead of, He is a hairdresser, clergyman, printer, perfumer, mer-

chant, fisherman, &c. you will be laughed at if you do not say, He is *in the hair-dressing line*, *in the clerical line*, *in the printing line*, *in the perfumery line*, *in the mercantile line*, *in the fishing line*, &c. *Feel* has become so very fashionable, that your old English substantive verbs, *Am* and *Be* are in danger of being forgotten. Instead of—I am anxious, I am afraid, I am disappointed, I am warm, I am sick, He is bold, They are ashamed, The room is damp, The day is cold, &c. you must say, I *feel* anxious, I *feel* afraid, I *feel* disappointed, I *feel* warm, I *feel* sick, He *feels* bold, They *feel* ashamed, the room *feels* damp, the day *feels* cold, &c.—His arguments *went to* prove, &c. Accounts from Spain *go to* say that, &c. This, because more verbose, is thought more elegant than—Accounts from Spain say—His arguments proved, &c.

SWIFT.

Those people seem to be put to hard shifts to make their books and speeches long and enigmatical. But surely such affectation cannot be universal.

MERCURY.

It is not. In the British senate, and in some British pulpits, you might hear strains of elo-

quence that would do honour to Demosthenes, and transcend the abilities of Tillotson and Bishop Taylor. You formerly admired Bolingbroke as a speaker, but were you to hear Mr. P.——

SWIFT.

Bolingbroke was a shallow fellow, though I own he imposed on Pope and me; but on a better, wiser, and more learned man than either of us, I mean Arbuthnot, he did not impose: the doctor understood him well. Bolingbroke's ostentation kept his ignorance out of sight, and because he was positive we thought him penetrating. He could turn a sentence so as to make it sound well; but it was all *words*, *words*, as Hamlet says. For my part, you know I never valued those modulated periods, as I think your criticks call them; brevity, simplicity, and proper words in proper places, form, in my opinion, the perfection of eloquence. But I interrupt you.

MERCURY.

I mentioned the necessity which an English writer, who aims at popularity, is now under, of using long words: I ought to have added, that it is also thought genteel sometimes to shorten ordinary expressions. For *reformation* every body now says *reform;* this being French, and

the other vile old English: instead of—for the future, it is fashionable to say *in future;* and beautiful (or ugly) *to a degree*, instead of—to a great degree. The last example has also the advantage of being elegant on account of its ambiguity: as the following very fashionable phrases have, of being not merely ambiguous, but unintelligible: he *sported sables, scouted the idea, netted a cool thousand*, has not *made up his mind*, &c.

SWIFT.

These indeed are such jargon, that I can make nothing of them. But I suppose they hardly deserve interpretation.

MERCURY.

In Elysium they do not deserve it; but in Great Britain you would be stared at as a prodigy of ignorance and rusticity, if you should seem ignorant of their meaning.—I know not whether I told you of a rule, which in the fabrication of this new dialect is much attended to: "Affect "uncommon terminations as much as possible." Instead of reference, preference, commitment, approbation, &c. say *referral*, *preferral*, *committal*, *approval*, and the *transferral* of property, instead of the transferring of property. But above all, to show your great learning, affect termina-

THE WORKS

OF

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AN ESSAY

ON

POETRY AND MUSICK.

PART II.

OF THE LANGUAGE OF POETRY.

HAVING finished what I intended to say on the general nature of poetry, as an imitative art, I proceed to consider the INSTRUMENT which it employs in its imitations; or, in other words to explain the general nature of POETICK LANGUAGE. For *language* is the poet's instrument of imitation, as *sound* is the musician's, and *colour* the painter's. My conclusions on this part of the subject will be found to terminate in the principles already laid down.

Words in poetry are chosen, first, for their *sense;* and, secondly, for their *sound*. That the first of these grounds of choice is the more excellent, nobody can deny. He who in literary

matters prefers sound to sense, is a fool. Yet sound is to be attended to, even in prose; and in verse demands particular attention. I shall consider poetical language, first, as SIGNIFICANT; and, secondly, as SUSCEPTIBLE OF HARMONY.

CHAPTER I.

Of Poetical Language, considered as significant.

IF, as I have endeavoured to prove, poetry be imitative of nature, poetical fictions of real events, poetical images of real appearances in the visible creation, and poetical personages of real human characters; it would seem to follow, that the *language of poetry* must be an imitation of the *language of nature*. For nothing but what is supposed to be natural can please; and language, as well as fable, imagery, and moral description, may displease, by being unnatural. What then is meant by *natural language?* This comes to be our first inquiry.

SECTION I.

An idea of Natural Language.

THE term *natural language* has sometimes been used by philosophers to denote those tones of the human voice, attitudes of the body, and

configurations of the features, which, being *naturally* expressive of certain emotions of the soul, are universal among mankind, and every where understood. Thus anger, fear, pity, adoration, joy, contempt, and almost every other passion, has a look, attitude, and tone of voice, peculiar to itself; which would seem to be the effect, not of men imitating one another, but of the soul operating upon the body; and which, when well expressed in a picture or statue, or when it appears in human behaviour, is understood by all mankind, as the external sign of that passion which it is for the most part observed to accompany. In this acceptation, *natural language* is contradistinguished to those articulate voices to which the name of *speech* has been appropriated; and which are also universal among mankind, though different in different nations; but derive all their meaning from human compact and *artifice*, and are not understood except by those who have been instructed in the use of them. But in this inquiry the term *natural language* denotes that use of speech, or of *artificial language*, which is suitable to the speaker and to the occasion. " Proper words in " proper places," is Swift's definition of a good style; and may with equal propriety, serve for a definition of that style, or mode of language,

which is here called *natural*, in contradistinction, not to *artificial* (itself being artificial) but to *unnatural;* and which it is the poet's business to imitate. I say, *to imitate:* for as poets (for a reason already given) copy nature, not as it is, but in that state of perfection, wherein consistently with verisimilitude, and with the genius of their work, it may be supposed to be; and are therefore said to *imitate* nature, that is, to give a view of nature similar to, but somewhat different from the reality: so, in forming poetical language, they must take for their model human speech, not in that imperfect state wherein it is used on the common occasions of life, but in that state of perfection, whereof, consistently with verisimilitude, it may be supposed to be susceptible.

But, as we cannot estimate the perfection or imperfection of poetical imagery, till we know the natural appearance of the thing described; so neither can we judge of this perfection of human speech, till we have formed some idea of that quality of language which we express by the epithet *natural.* That some modes of language are more natural than others, and that one mode may be natural at one time which at another would be unnatural, must be evident even to those who never studied criticism. Would soft words, for example, be natural in

the mouth of a very angry man? or do even the vulgar expect blustering expressions from him who melts with pity or love or sorrow? Between groans and pain, tears and grief, laughter and jocularity, trembling and fear, the connexion is not more natural, than between certain sentiments of the human mind and certain modifications of human language.

Natural language and *good* language are not the same: and Swift's definition, which is equally applicable to both, will not perhaps be found to express adequately the characteristick of either. The qualities of good language are perspicuity, simplicity, elegance, energy, and harmony. But language may possess all these qualities, and yet not be natural. Would the Anacreontick or Ovidian simplicity be natural in the mouth of Achilles, upbraiding Agamemnon with his tyranny and injustice; or of Lear defying the tempestuous elements, and imprecating perdition upon his daughters? Would that perspicuity which we justly admire in Cato's soliloquy,* be accounted natural in Hamlet's, † by those who know, that the former is supposed to speak with the rationality of a philosopher, and the latter

* It must be so. Plato, thou reason'st well, &c.

† To be, or not to be, &c.

with the agitation of a young man tortured to madness with sorrow and love, disappointment and revenge? Would language so magnificent as that in which the sublime Othello speaks of the pomp and honours of war, be natural in the mouth of the soft, the humble, the broken-hearted Desdemona bewailing her unhappy fate? Or would the sonorous harmony of the dithyrambick song or epick poem, suit the simplicity of shepherds, contending in alternate verse, and praising their mistresses, putting forth riddles, or making remarks upon the weather? Yet language must always be so far simple as to have no superfluous decoration; so far perspicuous, as to let us see clearly what is meant; and so far elegant, as to give no ground to suspect the author of ignorance, or want of taste.

Good language is determinate and absolute. We know it wherever we meet with it; we may learn to speak and write it from books alone. Whether pronounced by a clown or a hero, a wise man or an idiot, language is still good if it be according to rule. But natural language is something not absolute but relative; and can be estimated by those only, who have studied men as well as books; and who attend to the real or

supposed character of the speaker, as well as to the import of what is spoken.

There are several particulars relating to the speaker which we must attend to, before we can judge whether his expression be natural. It is obvious, that his *temper* must be taken into the account. From the fiery and passionate we expect one sort of language, from the calm and moderate another. That impetuosity which is natural in Achilles, would in Sarpedon or Ulysses be quite the contrary; as the mellifluent copiousness of Nestor would ill become the blunt rusticity of Ajax. Those diversities of temper which make men think differently on the same occasion, will also make them speak the same thoughts in a different manner. And as the temper of the same man is not always uniform, but is variously affected by youth and old age, and by the prevalence of temporary passions; so neither will that style which is most natural to him be always uniform, but may be energetick or languid, abrupt or equable, figurative or plain, according to the passions or sentiments that may happen to predominate in his mind. And hence, to judge whether his language be natural, we must attend, not only to the habitual temper, but also to the *present passions*, and even to the *age* of the speaker. Nor should we overlook his

intellectual peculiarities. If his thoughts be confused or indistinct, his style must be immethodical and obscure; if the former be much diversified, the latter will be equally copious. The *external circumstances* of the speaker, his rank and fortune, his education and company, particularly the two last, have no little influence in characterising his style. A clown and a man of learning, a pedantick and a polite scholar, a husbandman and a soldier, a mechanick and a seaman, reciting the same narrative, will, each of them, adopt a peculiar mode of expression, suitable to the ideas that occupy his mind, and to the language he has been accustomed to speak and hear: and if a poet, who had occasion to introduce these characters in a comedy, were to give the same uniform colour of language to them all, the style of that comedy, however elegant, would be unnatural. Our language is also affected by the very thoughts we utter. When these are lofty or groveling, there is a correspondent elevation or meanness in the language. The style of a great man is generally simple, but seldom fails to partake of the dignity and energy of his sentiments. In Greece and Rome, the corruption of literature was a consequence of the corruption of manners; and the manly simplicity of the old writers disappeared, as the

nation became effeminate and servile. Horace and Longinus * scruple not to ascribe the decline of eloquence, in their days, to a littleness of mind, the effect of avarice and luxury. The words of Longinus are remarkable. "The truly "eloquent (says he) must possess an exalted and "noble mind; for it is not possible for those who "have all their lives been employed in servile "pursuits, to produce any thing worthy of im- "mortal renown or general admiration." In fact, our words not only are the signs, but may be considered as the pictures of our thoughts. The same glow or faintness of colouring, the same consistency or incoherence, the same proportions of great and little, the same degrees of elevation, the same light and shade, that distinguish the one, will be found to characterise the other: and from such a character as Achilles or Othello we as naturally expect a bold, nervous, and animated phraseology, as a manly voice and commanding gesture. It is hardly necessary to add, that style, in order to be natural, must be adapted to the *sex* and to the *nation* of the speaker. These circumstances give a peculiarity to human thought, and must therefore diversify the modes of human language. I

* Hor. Ar. Poet. vers. 322—332. Longinus, sect. 9. 44.

will not say, as some have done, that a lady is always distinguishable by her style and hand-writing, as well as by her voice and features; but I believe it might be truly said, that female conversation, even when learned or philosophical, has, for the most part, an ease and a delicacy, which the greatest masters of language would find it difficult to imitate. The style that Shakspeare has given to Juliet's nurse, Mrs. Quickly, Desdemona, or Katharine, would not suit any male; nor the phraseology of Dogberry or Petruchio, Pistol or Falstaff, any female character. National peculiarities are also to be attended to by those who study natural language in its full extent. We should expect a copious and flowery style from an Asiatick monarch, and a concise and figurative expression from an American chief. A French marquis, and a country gentleman of England, would not use the same phrases on the same subject, even though they were speaking the same language with equal fluency. And a *valet-de-chambre* newly imported from Paris, or a Scotch footman who had been born and bred in Edinburgh, appearing in an English comedy, would be censured as an unnatural character, if the poet were to make him speak pure English.

May we not infer, from what has been said,

that "language is then according to nature, "when it is suitable to the supposed condition "of the speaker?" meaning by the word *condition*, not only the outward circumstances of *fortune*, *rank*, *employment*, *sex*, *age*, and *nation*, but also the internal temperature of the *understanding* and *passions*, as well as the peculiar nature of the *thoughts* that may happen to occupy the mind. Horace seems to have had this in view, when he said, that "if what is spoken on the "stage shall be unsuitable to the *fortunes* of the "speaker, both the learned and unlearned part "of the audience will be sensible of the impro- "priety: for that it is of great importance to "the poet to consider, whether the person "speaking be a slave or a hero; a man of mature "age, or warm with the passions of youth; a "lady of rank, or a bustling nurse; a luxurious "Assyrian, or a cruel native of Colchis; a mer- "cantile traveller, or a stationary husbandman; "an acute Argive, or a dull Beotian."*

But Horace's remark, it may be said, refers more immediately to the style of the drama; whereas we would extend it to poetry, and even to composition, in general. And it may be thought, that in those writings wherein the im-

* Hor. Ar. Poet. vers. 112.

itation of human life is less perfect, as in the epick poem, or wherein the style is uniformly elevated and pure, as in history and tragedy, this rule of language is not attended to. In what respect, for example, can the style of Livy or Homer be said to be suitable to the condition of the speaker? Have we not, in each author, a great variety of speeches, ascribed to men of different nations, ranks, and characters; who are all, notwithstanding, made to utter a language, that is not only grammatical, but elegant and harmonious? Yet no reader is offended: and no critick ever said, that the style of Homer or Livy is unnatural.

The objection is plausible. But a right examination of it will be found not to weaken, but to confirm and illustrate the present doctrine. I say, then, that language is natural, when it is suited to the supposed condition and circumstances of the speaker. Now, in history, the speaker is no other than the historian himself; who claims the privilege of telling his tale in his own way; and of expressing the thoughts of other men, where he has occasion to record them, in his own language. All this we must allow to be natural, if we suppose him to be serious. For every man, who speaks without affectation, has a style and a manner peculiar to

himself. A person of learning and eloquence, recapitulating on any solemn occasion the speech of a clown, would not be thought in earnest if he did not express himself with his wonted propriety. It would be difficult, perhaps he would find it impossible, to imitate the hesitation, barbarisms, and broad accent, of the poor man; and if he were to do so, he would affront his audience, and, instead of being thought a natural speaker, or capable of conducting important business, would prove himself a mere buffoon. Now an historian is a person who assumes a character of great dignity, and addresses himself to a most respectable audience. He undertakes to communicate information, not to his equals only or inferiours, but to the greatest, and most learned men upon earth. He wishes them to listen to him, and to listen with pleasure, to believe his testimony, and treasure up his sayings as lessons of wisdom, to direct them in the conduct of life, and in the government of kingdoms. In so awful a presence, and with views so elevated, what style is it natural for him to assume? A style uniformly serious and elegant, clear, orderly, and emphatical, set off with modest ornaments to render it pleasing, yet plain and simple, and such as becomes a man whose chief concern it is to know and de-

liver the truth. The moralist and the preacher are in similar circumstances, and will naturally adopt a similar style: only a more sublime and more pathetick energy, and language still plainer than that of the historian, though not less pure, will with reason be expected from those, who pronounce the dictates of divine wisdom, and profess to instruct the meanest as well as the greatest of mankind, in matters of everlasting importance.

When a man for the publick amusement, assumes any character, it is not necessary, nor possible, for him to impose upon us so far as to make us believe him to be the very person he represents: but we have a right to expect that his behaviour shall not belie his pretensions in any thing material. With all his powers of incantation, Garrick himself will never be able to charm us into a belief, that he is really Macbeth: all that can be done he does; he speaks and acts just as if he were that person; and this is all that the publick requires of him. Were he to fall short, or rather (for we need not suppose what will never happen) were any other tragedian to fall short of our expectations, and plead, by way of excuse, that truly he was neither a king nor a traitor, neither an ambitious nor a valiant man, and therefore ought not to be blamed for

not acting as becomes one; we should more easily pardon the fault, than the apology. Now it is very true, that an epick poet is no more inspired than any other writer, and perhaps was never seriously believed to be so. But as he lays claim to inspiration; and before the whole world professes to display the most interesting and most marvellous events, to be particularly informed in regard to the thoughts as well as actions of men, and to know the affairs of invisible beings and the economy of unseen worlds; we have a right to expect from him a language as much elevated above that of history and philosophy, as his assumed character and pretensions are higher than those of the historian and philosopher. From such a man, supposed to be invested with such a character, we have indeed a right to require every possible perfection of human thought and language. And therefore, if he were to introduce mean persons talking in their own dialect, it would be as unnatural, as if a great orator, on the most solemn occasion, were to lisp and prattle like a child; or a hero to address his victorious army in the jargon of a gypsy or pickpocket.

In the epopee, the muse, or rather the poet, is supposed to speak from beginning to end; the incidental orations ascribed to Thersites or

Nestor, to Ulysses or Polypheme, to Ascanius or Eneas, to Satan or Raphael, not being delivered, as in tragedy, by the several speakers in their own persons, but rehearsed by the poet in the way of narrative. These orations, therefore, must not only be adapted to the characters of those to whom they are ascribed, and to the occasion upon which they are spoken, but must also partake of the supposed dignity of the poet's character. And if so, they must be elevated to the general pitch of the composition; even though they be said to have been uttered by persons from whom, in common life, elegance of style would not have been expected. And a certain degree of the same elevation, must adhere to every description in epick poetry, though the thing described should be comparatively unimportant: which is no more than we naturally look for, when an eloquent man, in a solemn assembly, gives a detail of ordinary events, or recapitulates, in his own style and manner, the sentiments of an illiterate peasant. So that in the epick poem, (and in all serious poetry, narrative or didactick, wherein the poet is the speaker,) language, in order to be natural, must be suited to the assumed or supposed character of the poet, as well as to the occasion and subject. Polyphemus, in a farce or comedy, might speak

clownishly; because he there appears in person, and rusticity is his character: but Homer and Virgil, rehearsing a speech of Polyphemus, would indeed deliver thoughts suitable to his character and condition, but would express them in their own elegant and harmonious language. And hence we see, how absurdly those criticks argue, who blame Virgil for making Eneas *too poetical* (as they are pleased to phrase it) in the account he gives Dido of his adventures. They might with equal reason affirm, that every person in the Iliad and Odyssey, as well as Encid, speaks too poetically. The mistake arises from confounding epick with dramatick composition, and supposing that the heroes both of the one and of the other speak in their own persons. Whereas, in the first the poet is the only speaker, and in the last he never speaks at all: nay, the first is nothing more, from beginning to end, but a narration, or speech, delivered by a person assuming, and pretending to support, the character of an inspired poet. In the style, therefore, of the epopee, the poetick character must every where predominate, as well as the heroick; because a speech, in order to appear natural, must be suited to the supposed character of the speaker, as well as to the things and persons spoken of.

The puns that Milton ascribes to his devils, on a certain occasion,* are generally and justly condemned. It has, however, been urged, as an apology for them, that they are uttered by evil beings, who may be supposed to have lost, when they fell, all taste for elegance, as well as for virtue: and that the poet, on this one occasion, might have intended to make them both detestable as devils, and despicable as buffoons. But this plea cannot be admitted. For the fiends of Milton, notwithstanding their extreme wickedness, retain an elevation of mind, without which they could not have appeared in an epick poem, and which is inconsistent with the futility of a buffoon or witling. Granting, then, (what is not likely) that the poet, in this one instance, meant to render them contemptible for their low wit, he must yet be blamed for assigning them a part so repugnant to their general character. Or, even if he could be vindicated on this score, he is liable to censure for having put so paltry a part of his narration in the mouth of the holy angel Raphael. Or, if even for this we were to pardon him, still he is inexcusable, for having forgotten the assumed dignity of his own character so far, as to retail those wretched quibbles;

* Paradise Lost, book 6. vers. 609—627.

which, whether we suppose them to be uttered by an angel, a devil, or an epick poet, are grossly unnatural, because totally unsuitable to the condition and character of the speaker. A mind possessed with great ideas does not naturally attend to such as are trifling;* and, while actuated by admiration, and other important emotions, will not be apt to turn its view to those things that provoke contempt or laughter. Such we suppose the mind of every sublime writer to be; and such in fact it must be, as long at least as he employs himself in sublime composition.

* Who that, from Alpine heights, his labouring eye
Shoots round the wide horizon, to survey
The Nile or Ganges rolling his bright wave
Through mountains, plains, through empires black with shade,
And continents of sand, will turn his gaze
To mark the windings of a scanty rill,
That murmurs at his feet?

Pleasures of Imagination, book 1.

"The meditations," says a very ingenious writer, (speaking of the view from Mount Etna), "are ever "elevated in proportion to the grandeur and sublimity "of the objects that surround us; and here, where you "have all nature to rouse your imagination, what man "can remain inactive?" See the whole passage; which, from its sublimity, one would be tempted to think had been composed on the spot. *Brydon's Travels, letter* 10.

Mean language, therefore, or ludicrous sentiments, are unnatural in an epick poem, for this reason, among others, that they do not naturally occur while one is composing it. And hence Milton's humorous description of the *limbo of vanity*,* however just as an allegory, however poignant as a satire, ought not to have obtained a place in Paradise Lost. Such a thing might suit the volatile genius of Ariosto and his followers: but is quite unworthy of the sober and well principled disciple of Homer and Virgil.

In dramatick poetry, the persons act and speak in their own character, and the author never appears at all. An elevated style, may, however, be natural in tragedy, on account of the high rank of the persons, and of the important affairs in which they are engaged. Even comedy, who takes her characters from the middle and lower ranks of mankind, may occasionally lift up her voice, as Horace says,† when she means to give utterance to any important emotion, or happens to introduce a personage of more than ordinary dignity. But what if persons of low condition should make their appearance in tragedy? And as the great must have attendants, how can this be guarded against? And if such persons ap-

* Paradise Lost, book 3. vers. 444.

† Hor. Ar. Poet. vers. 92.

pear, will not their language be unnatural, if raised to a level with that of their superiours? Or, would it not give a motley cast to the poem, if it were to fall below that level? No doubt, an uniform colour of language, though not essential to tragi-comedy, or to the historick drama, is indispensable in a regular tragedy. But persons of mean rank, if the tragick poet find it necessary to bring them in, may easily be supposed to have had advantages of education to qualify them for bearing a part in the dialogue, or for any other office in which he may think proper to employ them. Besides, language admits of many degrees of elevation; and a particular turn of fancy, or temperature of the passions, will sometimes give wonderful sublimity to the style even of a peasant or of a savage. So that the style of tragedy, notwithstanding its elevation, may be as various as the characters and passions of men, and may yet in each variety be natural. Moreover, the subject, and consequently the emotions, of tragedy, are always important; and important emotions prevailing in the mind of a peasant will exalt and invigorate his language. When the old shepherd in *Douglas* exclaims, "Blest be the day that made me a poor man; "my poverty has saved my master's house;" the thought and the words, though sufficiently tra-

gical, have no greater elevation, than we should expect from any person of his character and circumstances. Simplicity of style, for which none are disqualified by the meanness of their condition, often enforces a sublime or pathetick sentiment with the happiest effect. Let it be observed further, that poetical language is an imitation of real language improved to a state of perfection; and therefore, that the style of tragedy, though raised above that of common life, will never offend, so long as its elevations are at all consistent with probability. In fact, when the passions are well expressed, and the characters well drawn, a tragick poet needs not fear, that he shall be found fault with for the elegance of his language: though no doubt a great master will always know how to proportion the degree of elegance to the character of the speaker.

The dignity of a tragick hero may be so great as to require an elevation of language equal to the pitch of epick poetry itself. This might be exemplified from many of the speeches of Lear, Othello, Hamlet, and Cato, and of Samson in the Agonistes. But, in general, the epick style is to be distinguished from the tragick, by a more uniform elevation, and more elaborate harmony: because a poet, assuming the character of calm inspiration, and rather relating the feelings of

others, than expressing his own, would speak with more composure, steadiness, and art, than could reasonably be expected from those who deliver their thoughts according to the immediate impulse of passion.

The language of comedy is that of common life improved in point of correctness, but not much elevated; both because the speakers are of the middle and lower ranks of mankind, and also because the affairs they are engaged in give little scope to those emotions that exalt the mind, and rouse the imagination. As to the style of farce, which is frequently blended with comedy; it is purposely degraded below that of common life; or rather, it is the ridiculous language of common life made more ridiculous. I have already remarked, that farce is to poetry what caricatura is to painting; as in the last we look for no beauty of attitude or feature, so neither in the first do we expect elegance of diction. Absurdity of thought produces absurdity of words and behaviour: the true farcical character is more extravagantly and more uniformly absurd, than the droll of real life; and his language, in order to be natural, must be exaggerated accordingly. Yet as nothing is esteemed in the fine arts, but what displays the ingenuity of the artist, I should imagine, that, even in a

farce, one would not receive much pleasure from mere incongruity of words or actions; because that may be so easily invented. Studied absurdity cannot be entertaining, unless it be in some degree uncommon.*

We may therefore repeat, and lay it down as a maxim, "That language is natural, when it is "suited to the speaker's condition, character, "and circumstances." And as, for the most part, the images and sentiments of serious poetry are copied from the images and sentiments, not of real, but of improved, nature;† so the language of serious poetry must (as hinted already) be a transcript, not of the real language of nature, which is often dissonant and rude, but of natural language improved as far as may be consistent with probability, and with the supposed character of the speaker. If this be not the case, if the language of poetry be such only as we hear in conversation, or read in history, it will, instead of delight, bring disappointment: because it will fall short of what we expect from an art which is recommended rather by its pleasurable qualities, than by its intrinsick utility; and to which, in order to render it pleasing, we grant

* Essay on Laughter, chap. 3.

† See above, part 1. chap. 3, 4, 5.

higher privileges, than to any other kind of literary composition, or any other mode of human language.

The next inquiry must therefore be, " How " is the language of nature to be improved?" or rather, " What are those improvements that " peculiarly belong to the language of poetry?"

SECTION II.

Natural Language is improved in Poetry by the use of Poetical Words.

One mode of improvement peculiar to poetical diction results from the use of those words, and phrases, which, because they rarely occur in prose, and frequently in verse, are by the grammarian and lexicographer termed *poetical*. In these some languages abound more than others: but no language I am acquainted with is altogether without them; and perhaps no language can be so, in which any number of good poems have been written. For poetry is better remembered than prose, especially by poetical authors; who will always be apt to imitate the phraseology of those they have been accustomed to read and admire: and thus, in the works of

poets, down through successive generations, certain phrases may have been conveyed, which, though originally perhaps in common use, are now confined to poetical composition. Prose writers are not so apt to imitate one another, at least in words and phrases; both because they do not so well remember one another's phraseology, and also because their language is less artificial, and must not, if they would make it easy and flowing, (without which it cannot be elegant), depart essentially from the style of correct conversation. Poets too, on account of the greater difficulty of their numbers, have, both in the choice and in the arrangement of words, a better claim to indulgence, and stand more in need of a discretionary power.

The language of Homer differs materially from what was written and spoken in Greece in the days of Socrates. It differs in the mode of inflection, it differs in the syntax, it differs even in the words; so that one might read Homer with ease, who could not read Xenophon; or Xenophon, without being able to read Homer. Yet I cannot believe that Homer, or the first Greek poet who wrote in his style, would make choice of a dialect quite different from what was intelligible in his own time; for poets have in all ages written with a view to be read, and to be read

with pleasure; which they could not be, if their diction were hard to be understood. It is more reasonable to suppose, that the language of Homer is according to some ancient dialect, which, though not perhaps in familiar use among the Greeks at the time he wrote, was however intelligible. From the Homerick to the Socratick age, a period had elapsed of no less than four hundred years; during which the style both of discourse and of writing must have undergone great alterations. Yet the Iliad continued the standard of heroick poetry, and was considered as the very perfection of poetical language; notwithstanding that some words in it were become so antiquated, or so ambiguous, that Aristotle himself seems to have been somewhat doubtful in regard to their meaning.* And if Chaucer's merit as a poet had been as great as Homer's, and the English tongue under Edward the third, as perfect as the Greek was in the second century after the Trojan war, the style of Chaucer would probably have been our model for poetical diction at this day; even as Petrarcha, his contemporary, is still imitated by the best poets of Italy.

I have somewhere read, that the rudeness of

* Aristot. Poet. cap. 25.

the style of Ennius was imputed by the old criticks to his having copied too closely the dialect of common life. But this, I presume, must be a mistake. For, if we compare the fragments of that author with the comedies of Plautus, who flourished in the same age, and whose language was certainly copied from that of common life, we shall be struck with an air of antiquity in the former, that is not in the latter. Ennius, no doubt, like most other sublime poets, affected something of the antique in his expression: and many of his words and phrases, not adopted by any prose writer now extant, are to be found in Lucretius and Virgil, and were by them transmitted to succeeding poets. These form part of the Roman poetical dialect; which appears from the writings of Virgil, where we have it in perfection, to have been very copious. The style of this charming poet is indeed so different from prose, and is altogether so peculiar, that it is perhaps impossible to analyse it on the common principles of Latin grammar. And yet no author can be more perspicuous or more expressive; notwithstanding the frequency of Grecism in his syntax, and his love of old words, which he, in the judgment of Quintilian, knew better than any other man how to improve into decoration.*

* Quintil. Instit. viii. 3. § 3.

The poetical dialect of modern Italy is so different from the prosaick, that I have known persons who read the historians, and even spoke with tolerable fluency the language of that country, but could not easily construe a page of Petrarcha or Tasso. Yet it is not probable, that Petrarcha, whose works are a standard of the Italian poetical diction,* made any material innovations in his native tongue. I rather believe, that he wrote it nearly as it was spoken in his time, that is, in the fourteenth century; omitting only harsh combinations, and taking that liberty which Homer probably, and Virgil certainly, took before him, of reviving such old, but not obsolete expressions, as seemed peculiarly significant and melodious; and polishing his style to that degree of elegance which human speech, without becoming unnatural, may admit of, and which the genius of poetry, as an art subservient to pleasure, may be thought to require.

The French poetry in general is distinguished from prose rather by the rhyme and the measure, than by old or uncommon phraseology. Yet the French, on certain subjects, imitate the style of their old poets, of Marot in particular: and may therefore be said to have something of

* Vicende della literatura del Denin, cap. 4.

a poetical dialect, though far less extensive than the Italian, or even than the English. And it may, I think, be presumed, that in future ages they will have more of this dialect than they have at present. This I would infer from the very uncommon merit of some of their late poets, particularly Boileau and La Fontaine, who, in their respective departments, will continue to be imitated, when the present modes of French prose are greatly changed: an event that, for all the pains they take to preserve their language, must inevitably happen, and whereof there are not wanting some presages already.

The English poetical dialect is not characterized by any peculiarities of inflection, nor by any great latitude in the use of foreign idioms. More copious it is, however, than one would at first imagine. I know of no author who has considered it in the way of detail.* What follows is but a very short specimen.

* Since writing the above, I have had the pleasure to read the following judicious remarks on this subject. "The language of the age is never the language "of poetry, except among the French, whose verse, "where the sentiment or image does not support it, "differs in nothing from prose. Our poetry, on the con- "trary, has a language peculiar to itself; to which al- "most every one that has wrtiten has added something.

1. A few Greek and Latin idioms are common in English poetry, which are seldom or never to be met with in prose. QUENCHED OF HOPE. Shakspeare.—SHORN OF HIS BEAMS. Milton. —*Created thing* NOR VALUED HE NOR SHUNN'D. Milton.—'*Tis thus we riot, while* WHO SOW IT STARVE. Pope.—INTO WHAT PIT THOU SEE'ST FROM WHAT HEIGHT FALLEN. Milton.—*He de-*

"by enriching it with foreign idioms, and derivatives; "nay, sometimes words of their own composition or "invention. Shakspeare and Milton have been great "creators this way; and no one more licentious than "Pope or Dryden, who perpetually borrow expressions "from the former. Let me give you some instances from "Dryden, whom every body reckons a great master "of our poetical tongue. Full of *museful mopings*—unlike "the *trim* of love—a pleasant *beverage*—a *roundelay* of "love—stood silent in his *mood*—with knots and *knares* "deformed—his *ireful mood*—in proud *array*—his *boon* "was granted—and *disarray* and shameful rout—*way-* "*ward* but wise—*furbished* for the field—*dodder'd* oaks "—*disherited*—*smouldering* flames—*retchless* of laws— "*crones* old and ugly—the *beldam* at his side—the *gran-* "*dam hag*—*villanize* his father's fame. But they are infi- "nite: and our language not being a settled thing, (like "the French) has an undoubted right to words of an "hundred years old, provided antiquity have not ren- "dered them unintelligible."

Mr. Gray's Letters, sect. 3. *letter* 4.

ceived the mother of mankind, WHAT TIME HIS PRIDE HAD CAST HIM *out of heaven.* Milton. Some of these, with others to be found in Milton, seem to have been adopted for the sake of brevity, which in the poetical tongue is indispensable. For the same reason perhaps, the articles *a* and *the* are sometimes omitted by our poets, though less frequently in serious than burlesque composition.* In English, the adjective generally goes before the substantive, the nominative before the verb, and the active verb before (what we call) the accusative. Exceptions, however, to this rule, are not uncommon even in prose. But in poetry they are more frequent. *Their homely joys, and* DESTINY OBSCURE. *Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight; and all*

* In the Greek poetry, the omission of the article is more frequent than the use of it. The very learned and ingenious author of a Treatise *On the Origin and Progress of Language,* supposes, that in the time of Homer, who established their poetical language, the article was little used by the Greeks: and this supposition appears highly probable, when we consider, that in the Latin, which was derived from the Pelasgick tongue, (a very ancient dialect of Greek), there is no article. Yet, though the article had been in use in Homer's age, I imagine that he, and every other Greek poet who wrote hexameters, would have often found it *necessary* to leave it out

the air a solemn stillness holds. In general, that versification may be less difficult, and the cadence more uniformly pleasing; and sometimes, too, in order to give energy to expression, or vivacity to an image, the English poet is permitted to take much greater liberties, than the prose writer, in arranging his words, and modulating his lines and periods. Examples may be seen in every page of Paradise Lost.

2. Some of our poetical words take an additional syllable, that they may suit the verse the better; as, *dispart*, *distain*, *disport*, *affright*, *enchain*, for part, stain, sport, fright, chain. Others seem to be nothing else than common words made shorter, for the convenience of the versifier. Such are *auxiliar*, *sublunar*, *trumpi*, *vale*, *part*, *clime*, *submiss*, *frolick*, *plain*, *drear*, *dread*, *helm*, *morn*, *eve*, *mead*, and *even*, *gan*, *illume* and *illumine*, *ope*, *hoar*, *hide*, *swage*, *scape;* for auxiliary, sublunary, trumpet, valley, depart, climate, submissive, frolicksome, complain, dreary, dreadful, helmet, morning, meadow, evening, began or began to, illuminate, open, hoary, abide, assuage, escape. Of some of these the short form is the more ancient. In Scotland, *even*, *morn*, *bide*, *swage*, are still in vulgar use; but *morn*, except when contradistinguished to even, is synonymous, not with *morning*, (as in the English poetical dialect,) but with *morrow*. The Latin poets, in a way

somewhat similar, and perhaps for a similar reason, shortened *fundamentum*, *tutamentum*, *munimentum*, &c. into fundamen, tutamen, munimen.*

3. Of the following words which are now almost peculiar to poetry, the greater part are ancient, and were once no doubt in common use in England, as many of them still are in Scotland. *Afield*, *amain*, *annoy* (a noun), *anon*, *aye* (ever), *behest*, *blithe*, *brand* (sword), *bridle*, *carol*, *dame* (lady), *featly*, *fell* (an adjective), *gaude*, *gore*, *host* (army), *lambkin*, *late* (of late), *lay* (poem), *lea*, *glade*, *gleam*, *hurl*, *lore*, *meed*, *orisons*, *plod* (to travel laboriously), *ringlet*, *rue* (a verb), *ruth*, *ruthless*, *sojourn* (a noun), *smite*, *speed* (an active verb), *save* (except), *spray* (twig), *steed*, *strain* (song), *strand*, *swain*, *thrall*, *thrill*, *trail* (a verb), *troll*, *wail*, *welter*, *warble*, *wayward*, *woo*, *the while* (in the mean time), *you*, *of yore*.

4. These that follow are also poetical; but, so far as I know, were never in common use. *Aptal*, *arrowy*, *attune*, *battailous*, *breezy*, *car* (chariot), *clarion*, *cates*, *courser*, *darkling*, *flicker*, *floweret*,

* Quod poetæ alligati ad certam pedum necessitatem, non semper propriis uti possint, sed depulsi a recta via necessario ad eloquendi quædam diverticula confugiant; nec mutare quædam modo verba, sed *extendere*, *corripere*, convertere, dividere, cojantur. *Quintilian.*

emblaze, *gairish*, *circlet*, *impearl*, *nightly*, *noiseless*, *pinion* (wing), *shadowy*, *slumberous*, *streamy*, *troublous*, *wilder* (a verb), *shrill* (a verb), *shook* (shaken), *madding*, *viewless*. I suspect too, that the following, derived from the Greek and Latin, are peculiar to poetry. *Clang*, *clangour*, *choral*, *bland*, *boreal*, *dire*, *ensanguined*, *ire*, *ireful*, *lave* (to wash), *nymph* (lady, girl), *orient*, *panoply*, *philomel*, *infuriate*, *jocund*, *radiant*, *rapt*, *redolent*, *refulgent*, *verdant*, *vernal*, *zephyr*, *zone* (girdle), *sylvan*, *suffuse*.

5. In most languages, the rapidity of pronunciation abbreviates some of the commonest words, or even joins two, or perhaps more, of them, into one; and some of these abbreviated forms find admission into writing. The English language was quite disfigured by them in the end of the last century; but Swift, by his satire and example, brought them into disrepute: and, though some of them be retained in conversation, as *don't*, *shan't*, *can't*, they are now avoided in solemn style; and by elegant writers in general, except where the colloquial dialect is imitated, as in comedy. *'Tis* and *'twas*, since the time of Shaftesbury, seem to have been daily losing credit, at least in prose; but still have a place in poetry; perhaps because they contribute to conciseness. *'Twas on a lofty vase's side.* Gray. *'Tis*

true, 'tis certain, man though dead retains part of himself. Pope.—In verse too, *over* may be shortened into *o'er*, (which is the Scotch, and probably was the old English, pronunciation) *never* into *ne'er;* and from *the* and *to*, when they go before a word beginning with a vowel, the final letter is sometimes cut off. *O'er hills, o'er dales, o'er crags, o'er rocks they go.* Pope.—*Where'er she turns, the graces homage pay. And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave. Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unrol.* Gray.—*T' alarm th' eternal midnight of the grave.* These abreviations are now peculiar to the poetical tongue, but not necessary to it. They sometimes promote brevity, and render versification less difficult.

6. Those words which are commonly called *compound epithets*, as *rosy-finger'd, rosy-bosom'd, many-twinkling, many-sounding, moss-grown, bright-eyed, straw-built, spirit-stirring, incense-breathing, heaven-taught, love-whispering, lute-resounding*, are also to be considered as part of our poetical dialect. It is true we have compounded adjectives in familiar use, as *high-seasoned, well-natured, ill-bred*, and innumerable others. But I speak of those that are less common, that seldom occur except in poetry, and of which in prose the use would appear affected. And that they sometimes promote brevity and

vivacity of expression, cannot be denied. But, as they give, when too frequent, a stiff and finical air to a performance; as they are not always explicit in the sense, nor agreeable in the sound; as they are apt to produce a confusion, or too great a multiplicity of images; as they tend to disfigure the language, and furnish a pretext for endless innovation; I would have them used sparingly; and those only used, which the practice of popular authors has rendered familiar to the ear, and which are in themselves peculiarly emphatical and harmonious. For I cannot think, with Dacier and Sanadon, that this well known verse in Horace's Art of Poetry,

> Dixeris egregie, notum si callida verbum
> Reddiderit junctura novum ——

gives any warrant, even to a Latin poet, for the formation of these compound words; which, if I mistake not, were more fashionable in the days of Ennius, than of Horace or Virgil.*

* The criticks are divided about the meaning of this passage. Horace is speaking of *new words;* which he allows to be sometimes necessary: but which, he says, ought to be *sparingly* and *cautiously* introduced; In verbis etiam *tenuis cautusque* serendis; and then subjoins the words quoted in the text, Dixeris egregie, &c.

1. Some think, that this *callida junctura* refers to the

7. In the transformation of nouns into verbs and participles, our poetical dialect admits of greater latitude than prose. Hymn, pillow, curtain, story, pillar, picture, peal, surge, cavern,

formation of *compound epithets*, as velivolus, saxifragus, solivagus, &c. and that the import of the precept is this: "Rather than by bringing in a word altogether new, even "when a new word is necessary, you should express "yourself by two known words artfully joined together "into one, so as to assume a new appearance, and to ad- "mit a new though analogical signification." This might no doubt be done with propriety in some cases. But I cannot think, that Horace is here speaking of compound words. For, first, this sort of words were much more suitable to the genius of the Greek than of the Latin tongue; as Quintilian somewhere insinuates, and every body knows who is at all acquainted with these languages. Secondly, we find in fact, that these words are less frequent in Horace and Virgil, than in the older poets; whence we may infer, that they became less fashionable as the Latin tongue advanced nearer to perfection. Thirdly, Virgil is known to have introduced three or four new words from the Greek, *Lychni, Spelæa, Thyas*, &c. but it does not appear, that either Virgil or Horace ever fabricated one of these compound words; and it is not probable, that Horace would recommend a practice, which neither himself nor Virgil had ever warranted by example. Fourthly, our author, in his illustrations upon the precept in question, affirms, that new words will more easily obtain currency if taken from the Greek tongue; and Virgil, if we may judge of

honey, career, cincture, bosom, sphere, are common nouns; but, *to hymn*, *to pillow*, *curtained*, *pillared*, *pictured*, *pealing*, *surging*, *cavern'd*, *honied*, *careering*, *cinctured*, *bosomed*, *sphered*, would ap-

his opinions by his practice, appears to have been of the same mind. And there was good reason for it. The Greek and Latin are kindred languages; and as the former was much studied at Rome, there was no risk of introducing any obscurity into the Roman language by the introduction of a Greek word. Lastly, it may be doubted, whether *junctura*, though it often denotes the composition of words in a sentence or clause (Quintil. ix. 4.), and sometimes arrangement or composition in general (Hor. Ar. Poet. verse 242.) is ever used to express the union of syllables in a word, or of simple words in a compound epithet.

2. Other interpreters suppose, that this *callida junctura* refers to the arrangement of words in the sentence, and that the precept amounts to this: "When a new expression is necessary, you will acquit yourself well, if "by means of an artful arrangement you can to a known "word give a new signification." But one would think, that the observance of this precept must tend to the utter confusion of language. To give new significations to words in present use, must increase the ambiguity of language, which in every tongue is greater than it ought to be, and which would seem to be more detrimental to eloquence and even to literature, than the introduction of many new words of definite meaning. Those who favour this interpretation give *comæ sylvarum* for *folia*, as a phrase to exemplify the precept. But

pear affected in prose, though in verse they are warranted by the very best authority.

Some late poets, particularly the imitators of Spenser, have introduced a great variety of un-

the foilage of a tree is not a new idea, nor could there be any need of a new word or new phrase to express it: though a poet, no doubt, on account of his verse, or on some other account, might choose to express it by *a figure*, rather than by its *proper* name. *Comæ sylvarum* for *folia*, is neither less nor more than a metaphor, or, if you please, a catachresis; but Horace is speaking, not of figurative language, but of new words. Both these interpretations suppose, that the words of our poet are to be construed according to this order: Dixeris egregie, si callida junctura reddiderit *notum verbum novum*.

3. The best of all our poet's interpreters, the learned Dr. Hurd, construes the passage in the same manner, and explains it thus: "Instead of framing new words, I "recommend to you any kind of artful management, by "which you may be able to give a new air and cast to "old ones." And this explication he illustrates most ingeniously by a variety of examples, that throw great light on the subject of poetical diction. See his notes on the *Ars Poetica*.

I should ill consult my credit, if I were to oppose my judgment to that of this able critick and excellent author. Yet I would beg leave to say, that to me the poet seems, through this whole passage, from vers. 46. to vers. 72. to be speaking of the *formation of new words;* a practice whereof he allows the danger, but proves the necessity. And I find I cannot divest myself of an old prejudice

common words, as certes, eftsoons, ne, whilom, transmew, moil, fone, losel, albe, hight, dight, pight, thews, couthful, assot, muchel, wend, arrear, &c. These were once poetical words, no doubt; but they are now obsolete, and to many readers unintelligible. No man of the present age, however conversant in this dialect, would naturally express himself in it on any interesting emergence; or, supposing this natural to the antiquarian, it would never appear so to the common hearer or reader. A mixture of these words, therefore, must ruin the pathos of mod-

in favour of another interpretation, which is more obvious and simple, and which I considered as the best, long before I knew it was authorized by that judicious annotator Joannes Bond, and by Dryden in his notes upon the Eneid, as well as by the Abbe Batteux in his commentary on Horace's *Art of Poetry*. "New words "(says the poet) are to be cautiously and sparingly in-"troduced; but, when necessary, an author will do well "to give them such a position in the sentence, as that "the reader shall be at no loss to discover their mean-"ing." For I would construe the passage thus, Dixeris egregie, si callida junctura reddiderit *novum verbum notum*. But why, it may be said, did not Horace, if this was really his meaning, put *novum* in the first line, and *notum* in the second? The answer is easy. His verse would not admit that order: for the first syllable of *novum* is short, and the first syllable of *notum* long.

ern language; and as they are not familiar to our ear, and plainly appear to be sought after and affected, will generally give a stiffness to modern versification. Yet in subjects approaching to the ludicrous they may have a good effect; as in the *Schoolmistress* of Shenstone, Parnel's Fairy Tale, Thomson's Castle of Indolence, and Pope's lines in the Dunciad upon Wormius. But this effect will be most pleasing to those who have least occasion to recur to the glossary.

But why, it may be asked, should these old words be more pathetick and pleasing in Spenser, than in his imitators? I answer, because in him they seem, or we believe them to be, natural; in them we are sure they are affected. In him there is an ease and uniformity of expression, that shows he wrote a language not materially different from what was written by all the serious poets of his time; whereas the mixed dialect of these imitators is plainly artificial, and such as would make any man ridiculous, if he were now to adopt it in conversation. A long beard may give dignity to the portrait or statue of a hero, whom we know to have been two hundred years in his grave: but the chin of a modern European commander bristling with that antique appendage, would appear awkward and ridiculous. But did not Spenser himself make use of

words that are known to have been obsolete, or merely provincial, in his time? Yes; and these words in Spenser have the same bad effect, that words now obsolete have in his imitators; they are to most readers unintelligible, and to those who understand them appear ludicrous or affected: some of his eclogues, and even some passages in the Fairy Queen, are liable to this censure. But what if Spenser had fixed the poetical language of England, as Homer did that of Greece? Would any of his old words in that case have appeared awkward in a modern poem? Perhaps they would not: but let it be observed, that, in that case, they would have been adopted by Milton, and Dryden, and Pope, and by all our serious poets since the age of Elizabeth; and would therefore have been perfectly intelligible to every reader of English verse; and, from our having been so long accustomed to meet with them in the most elegant compositions, would have acquired a dignity equal, or perhaps superiour, to that which now belongs to the poetical language of Pope and Milton.

I grant, it is not always easy to fix the boundary between poetical and obsolete expressions. To many readers, *lore*, *meed*, *behest*, *blithe*, *gaude*, *spray*, *thrall*, may already appear antiquated; and to some the style of Spenser, or even of Chau-

cer, may be as intelligible as that of Dryden. This however we may venture to affirm, that a word, which the majority of readers cannot understand without a glossary, may with reason be considered as obsolete; and ought not to be used in modern composition, unless revived, and recommended to the publick ear, by some very eminent writer. There are but few words in Milton, as *nathless*, *tine*, *frore*, *bosky*, &c.; there are but one or two in Dryden, as *falsify:** and in Pope, there are none at all, which every reader of our poetry may not be supposed to understand: whereas in Shakspeare there are many, and in Spenser many more, for which one who knows English very well may be obliged to consult the dictionary. The practice of Milton, Dryden, or Pope, may therefore, in almost all cases, be admitted as good authority for the use of a poetical word. And in them, all the words above enumerated, as poetical, and in present use, may actually be found. And of such poets as may choose to observe this rule, it will not be said, either that they reject the judgment of Quin-

* Dryden in one place (Eneid ix. vers. 1095) uses *falsified* to denote *pierced through and through*. He acknowledges, that this use of the word is an innovation; and has nothing to plead for it but his own authority, and that *falsare* in Italian sometimes means the same thing.

tilian, who recommends the newest of the old words, and the oldest of the new, or that they are unattentive to Pope's precept,

> Be not the first by whom the new are tried,
> Nor yet the last to lay the old aside.*

We must not suppose, that these poetical words never occur at all, except in poetry. Even from conversation they are not excluded; and the ancient criticks allow, that they may be admitted into prose; where they occasionally confer dignity upon a sublime subject, or, for reasons elsewhere hinted at,† heighten the ludicrous qualities of a mean one. But it is in poetry only, where the frequent use of them does not savour of affectation.

Nor must we suppose them essential to this art. Many passages there are of exquisite poetry, wherein not a single phrase occurs, that might not be used in prose. In fact the influence of these words in adorning English verse is not very extensive. Some influence however they have. They serve to render the poetical style, first, more melodious; and, secondly, more solemn.

First, They render the poetical style more

* Essay on Criticism, vers. 335.

† Essay on Laughter, chap. 2. sect. 4.

melodious, and more easily reducible into measure. Words of unwieldy size, or difficult pronunciation, are never used by correct poets, where they can be avoided; unless in their sound they have something imitative of the sense. Homer's poetical inflections contribute wonderfully to the sweetness of his numbers: and if the reader is pleased to look back to the specimen I gave of the English poetical dialect, he will find that the words are in general well sounding, and such as may coalesce with other words, without producing harsh combinations. Quintilian observes, that poets, for the sake of their verse, are indulged in many liberties, not granted to the orator, of lengthening, shortening, and dividing their words:* and if the Greek and Roman poets claimed this indulgence from necessity, and obtained it, the English, those of them especially who write in rhyme, may claim it with better reason; as the words of their language are less musical, and far less susceptible of variety in arrangement and syntax.

Secondly, Such poetical words as are known to be ancient have something venerable in their appearance, and impart a solemnity to all around them. This remark is from Quintilian; who

* Instit. Orat. lib. 10. cap. 1. § 4.

adds, that they give to a composition that cast and colour of antiquity, which in painting is so highly valued, but which art can never effectually imitate.* Poetical words that are either not ancient, or not known to be such, have however, a pleasing effect from association. We are accustomed to meet with them in sublime and elegant writing; and hence they come to acquire sublimity and elegance: even as the words we hear on familiar occasions come to be accounted familiar; and as those that take their rise among pickpockets, gamblers, and gypsies, are thought too indelicate to be used by any person of taste or good manners. When one hears the following lines, which abound in poetical words,

> The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
> The swallow twittering from the strawbuilt shed,
> The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
> No more shall rouze them from their lowly bed:

one is as sensible of the dignity of the language, as one would be of the vileness or vulgarity of that man's speech, who should prove his acquaintance with Bridewell, by interlarding his discourse with such terms as *milldoll*, *queer cull*, or *nubbing cheat*;† or who, in imitation of

* Lib. 8. cap. 3. § 3.

† See the Scoundrel's Dictionary.

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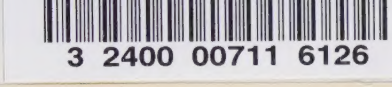
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